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CATHAL MORE;

OR,

SELF-LOVE AND SELF-CONTROL.

BY ARAMI,

“PER ARDUA AD ALTA.”

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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TO MY FRIEND

RAMIA,

I DEDICATE, AS IS VERY MEET,

THIS BOOK;

FOR IF THERE BE SOME SPARKS OF TRUTH

SCATTERED THROUGH ITS PAGES,

THEY HAVE BEEN STRUCK OUT IN OUR

PAST CONVERSE.

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CATHAL MORE.

CHAPTER I.

I AM an old man, and have observed some curious passages in the lives of others. Strange events occur to most people, though perhaps unnoticed by their neighbours, and an interesting story might be made of the most apparently uneventful life, if its under currents were made known.

The study of mankind has ever been more interesting to me than poring over men's works, and as all have not leisure nor inclination for the dissection of minds, in which many of my leisure hours have been spent, I offer some rough notes of what I have observed in the narrow sphere in which circumstances have placed me; and yet not narrow, for it is the mind, and not the exterior condition, that circumscribes or enlarges our circle of being. The greatest king, on

the greatest throne, may be shut up in a "black hole" of moral existence, while his closest prisoner is master of unfettered thoughts. As a dispensary doctor, in an out-of-the-way part of Ireland, I have been unceasingly occupied for fifty years in the exercise of my profession, but even in this course of my life, monotonous as it may seem, I have, thank God, made many friends, and I think I have lost none but by death. Among them none are more dear to me than the Mores of Cappagh; and Cathal More, the present head of the family, I have loved as a son from his infancy, when he lost his father; and well he deserves my love, and of late, almost my veneration, though forty years my junior.

On the 16th of December, 1844, I was seated with him and his mother, after dinner, in the antique hall of Cappagh House. They were the only surviving members of this once large family, when assembled for the Christmas festival.

I was at that time almost a daily guest, for, before the troubled times which have of late come on Ireland, no one was more hospitable than Cathal More, no mother kinder to a son's guests than his; and the carved oak panellings and polished beams of the hall, reflected many a gathering of his cousins and friends. It is customary

to describe Irish society as if it were for the most part composed of half-drunken fools, and vulgar Messieurs and Mesdames Malaprop. My fifty years' experience has not led me into such scenes, and I think those who depict them cannot have known our upper classes at all, or at most, only their discarded members.

We were alone on the evening of which I write. Mrs. More sat on one side of the wide hearth, reading that day's newspaper, while her son, in the opposite arm-chair, studied a map of his estate, with pamphlets, estimates, and plans of all kinds for the improvement of his tenantry—his constant care—on a table by his side. In appearance, he was tall, but his figure was strong and well made, so his height was not ungainly; he had black hair, a low Greek forehead, and rather feminine features, but his complexion was dark and bronzed by travel. His forehead, however, was white, and the "blue blood" was almost visible as it coursed through the prominent frontal vein. He was not strictly handsome, for his features were too finely cut for masculine beauty, but the shape of his head was perfect, and a glint of his deep-set eyes lighted up his whole countenance with a peculiar beauty.

Yet, much as I love Cathal, good and clever

as he was, his mother was superior to him. For nearly thirty years she had been a widow, with the heavy trust of a property, difficult to manage, committed to her ; and never have I known her fail in the rightful fulfilment of it. But she was now grown old, and glad to find a substitute in her son, when he returned from his long travels. The union between this mother and son was of a degree seldom seen in these independent days, he, looking to her experience in all perplexed matters ; she, communicating it without the ostentation of age, and with rare wisdom acknowledging the power and youth-strength of her son's intelligence.

She was in form a slight, withered old woman, worn by care and thought, grave and gentle in her manner, generally silent, but when she chanced to speak of a topic interesting to her, she became calmly, but impressively eloquent. One did not perceive the power of her words at the moment of their utterance, but they left a deeper after-impression than such orators as I have heard speak, ever produced on me. The charm was given to them by her wise life, devoted to the cause of truth, and her hearty faith in her own sincerity ; for these are the corner-stones of eloquence, on which, indeed, it is good to erect an arch of well-

sounding words ; but without which for foundation, the finest edifice of language will be but an unsafe height to both the speaker and the hearer. Even her silence was “eloquent repose,” the eloquent repose of life’s sunset, glowing in the softened brightness that succeeds a burning day, during which much good work in the vineyard has been done.

But I forget time and space in speaking of those I love. That 16th of December was a rough night, and we drew close to the fire, and the two favourite spaniels had cowered as near to the springing wood flames as their fears would allow, every now and then starting away in fright, when some brighter jet flashed up.

I had just spoken of our good fortune in being within doors on such a night, when one of the dogs cocked his ears and growled, and a sharp ring at the entrance-bell instantly followed.

“What can that be, Cathal?” said Mrs. More.

“Some magistrate’s business, I suppose,” he replied, as he hastily left the room to see what it might be. Almost immediately, he returned with two gentlemen, and addressing his mother, he said—

“Let me introduce you to these strangers, whose carriage broke down as they were travel-

ling by the gate." Mrs. More bowed, and said kindly she was glad she and her son had the pleasure of being of any use, and expressed a hope that they would not think of going on that night. The elder traveller replied, that one of their horses had fallen, coming down a steep hill near the gate, and the pole of their carriage was broken; hearing that a gentleman's house was so near, he had, he said, come to borrow a light, that he might see if the horse was much hurt. If it could go on, he would not tax their kindness further, as he wished to be in England on the following day.

While he was thus explaining the matter to Mrs. More, Cathal had gone out to order more assistance to be given to the stranger's servant, but he returned, saying, "I trust it will not much inconvenience you to remain here to-night. The horse is quite disabled, the post-boy says, and a fresh one can hardly be got from ——, our nearest posting town, in time for you to go on before morning." "I fear then, I must give up my purpose of a quick journey, and take your very kind offer of beds," replied the stranger. "Let me introduce you to my son, Rupert Schelling, as we are to be your guests." The very graceful fair-haired young man so called, bowed low to

Mrs. More ; and now that his name suggested the idea, I fancied I saw something foreign in the looks of both father and son. They were alike fair, alike slight and tall, and both had finely-cut Teutonic features ; but the world and the world's god, Mammon, had set his seal on the forehead of the elder. His eyes were bright, but keen and cold, his mouth well curved, but cautious and scornful, his whole countenance handsome, yet it was that of a spy, suspicious of all around, and as if expecting an enemy at every corner.

I did not discover all this at a glance, but I saw him often afterwards, and his face, when in repose and wearing its natural look, always left the same disagreeable impression on my mind.

His manner did not bear it out ; it was frank, and so refined as to satisfy even Mrs. More. The younger gentleman was very quiet, and spoke little, and I observed a look of delicacy and sorrow on his countenance ; his features were not so regularly handsome as his father's, but his eyes were—

..... Stars, very stars,
And all eyes else dead coals.

They had their luggage brought up to the house, and we were soon again listening to the storm without, with the pleasant sensation of shelter.

The strangers quickly made their presence felt, and we found that the elder Mr. Schelling was singularly clever in conversation; he had been travelling through much of Ireland, and his remarks on its condition were shrewd.

Cathal was, moreover, pleased to find that his new acquaintance agreed very much in political views with him; for they were both, of those who drew great augury from the prosperity of Ireland in those years, and who joyfully prophesied its rapid advance in national greatness; and he felt a kindliness growing in his heart towards an Englishman, (for Mr. Schelling, though of German stock, had adopted England for his country), who could so well appreciate the resources of his country.

They discussed various plans of improvement; how railways were to traverse Ireland, and connect England with America; how Irish peat was to replace the exhausted coal-mines; and how, at the same time, the very bogs that supplied it were to become fertile land, after making, I don't know how many pounds of candles out of each acre of turf? At last, my head swam in schemes, and turning to the younger stranger, and Mrs. More, who appeared in equally interesting converse, I sought a footing on dry ground—rather

dry ground indeed it seemed to be, for I heard his voice say, "Then if you do not allow our superiority over our ancestors, you do not admit the progression of mankind."

"I am not very well read in history," Mrs. More answered, "but it seems to me that though the world's general progress towards perfection cannot be doubted, still it does not necessarily follow that any one nation is in the vanguard. It is not in a regular line we march, and some great interruptions have occurred. One of the best proofs of our superiority would be, I think, our not fancying ourselves better than our forefathers—for the more knowledge we attain, the more we see of what we have not yet attained."

"But surely you believe in individual perfectibility?"

"God forbid that I should doubt the eventual possibility of perfectness—but we do not know what existence we may be in when we attain to it, whether it be possible in this, or will be deferred to a future state. But do not think, by perfectness, that I mean a state of sinlessness produced by our own volition. I mean, that by a continued faith in the Atonement, and an exercise of the moral acts, which are the offspring

of faith, we may come to that condition—that no sin be imputed to us by our just Judge.”

While she thus spoke, the countenance of her listener grew overcast and, resuming, his reserved and cold manner, which for a moment he had laid aside—“I ought to tell you,” he said, “that my father and I are Unitarians, and he has imposed on me, as a condition, which I have promised to fulfil, that, until I am twenty-one, I shall not discuss the points in which our faiths disagree, or read any books on the subject. I have found it very needless, generally, to announce this to acquaintances; but it is plain that you take too deep an interest in religion to leave it in the back ground, and you might think my silence strange, if I did not tell you the circumstances which cause it.”

Mrs. More looked much pained, and remained silent for some moments—at last, she said—

“And, when you are twenty-one, will your father assist you in using your free judgment? But free, I fear, it cannot be, for habit is the greatest fetter on free-will.”

“Yes; my father wishes me to study, and weigh the differences between his faith and other creeds; he is very certain I shall greatly prefer the Unitarian tenets.”

“And when will the time come for your decision?” asked Mrs. More.

“I shall be of age in June. I intend then to devote six months at least, and more, if I am shaken in my present faith, to reading on the subject.”

They remained silent. It was a topic of the gravest interest, and yet one which might not be approached.

It grew late, and Mrs. More rang for the bed-room candles; but, before she went, she said to the elder Mr. Schelling—“I trust my son can prevail on you not to leave us to-morrow, if the need for your going be not very urgent. You will confer real pleasure on us by remaining.—If you are really interested in Ireland, Cathal will show you some Irish remains of the past.”

Mr. Schelling bowed, and, with some courteous words, accepted the invitation, warmly pressed as it was by her son, who seemed much pleased with his new acquaintance.

The next morning rose clear, and soft, and sunny, with more of summer in it than many a July day—at least, its summerness was more valued than if it had come at a time when we think we have a right to fine weather. The night had been so stormy, that Cathal had in-

sisted on my not leaving his house, and, as I am an early riser, I saw the morning break over the beautiful woods of Cappagh. It struck me, as I gazed, that the sun would not be so beautiful if it had not the dingy earth as a ground on which to exhibit the glory of its beams; and thus, I thought to myself, the glory of the Sun of our faith is most shown where his rays fall on us erring mortals—even our sinfulness, the clouds and mists of our moral world, seem to add to it. While I was so meditating, Mr. Rupert Schelling joined me in my morning walk, and in my admiration of the landscape before us.

Cappagh is on the side of a large heathy mountain; the greater part of the grounds is covered with natural oak, a remnant of the ancient forests, which at one time, shadowed Ireland. But out of this, glades and breaks were cut for pasture-land, and round them the old trees stretch their arms wide, as if seeking their lost companions. There was an extensive view from the house, which stood high, over a flat cultivated tract, stretching away for thirty or forty miles, and bounded by a pale misty outline of hills. The lights and shades passing over so great a space were, on a dappled day, as varied as a kaleidoscope, and a large tract of bog, about four

miles broad, returned the glance of the sun with a peculiar beauty. To my eyes, who love colouring more than outline in a landscape, this bog was one of the most beautiful features in the prospect. It was distant enough to allow its own to mingle with the prismatic colours; on a "gray-day" it was as blue as the March sea; if a sun-burst fell upon it, it was a second "field of the cloth of gold"—but, on this morning, it seemed in the rising sun, of a pale amethyst colour.

The church spire, with its cross, rose bright and clear over the dark-coloured wood; the foreground was a sea of moving colours, which the level rays reflected from the wet leaves, and the fields seemed steeped in a rainbow.

My companion and I had scarcely time for conversation, for there was too much to admire. At last, we turned into a shady avenue—it was the lining of nature's glorious dress.

"Is Mr. More much attached to this beautiful place?" said Rupert.

"Next to his mother, it is his dearest possession."

"Are he and his mother the only residents here?" he inquired.

"Yes," I said, "they are the only ones remain-

ing of their immediate family. Mrs. More has lost many children here, and I scarcely know whether the memorials of them in every object around, or her living son, are most dear to her."

"She seems more thoughtful, and less conventional, than most women," said he; "I am sure she has a superior mind."

"She has been thrown on its resources, and made to exercise it, more than female life generally requires. Her husband died while she was yet young; by his will, his son could not be declared of legal age until he was thirty,—every power was vested in her, and her husband on his death-bed earnestly besought her to reside here. All these conditions she has fulfilled almost unaided; as, to avoid the annoyances Cathal would have encountered from his legal powerlessness if he had remained at home, she induced him to spend most of his time in travelling and studying abroad."

"But, if Mrs. More has lived so secludedly, how is it she is so well informed and agreeable?"

"My dear sir," I answered, "a few really philosophic books, which will provoke original thought, do more for education than a thousand modern volumes of ready-made reasonings and discoveries. Our mental powers require work as

well as any other part of our frame. But too often we lazily read, when we ought to think, and clog our memories with a load of undigested facts, and ‘useful knowledge,’ badly remembered and always out of repair, if we do happen to need it. Mrs. More has often been forced to use her own mind, therefore, it has a good appetite, and is able to digest almost any food. That is the essence of her agreeability ; she has thought of what she talks about, and has not merely learned it by rote out of a book.”

Rupert was about to answer, when my servant came running up to tell me there was a case of croup in the village, which required my immediate offices. I begged my young acquaintance to excuse me to Mrs. More, and thoughtlessly, said, “ I suppose I shall see you at church.” He replied—

“ After your service is over, I hope so.”

I had not time to apologize, but hastily bowing, I left him for my professional duties.

CHAPTER II.

THE village and neighbourhood of which I write, owed much of their prosperity and comfort to our rector, Mr. Hyde, and his family. He did not confine his labours to performing the graver duties of a clergyman, but rightly judging that improvement in the well-being of what was mortal in his charge, contributed also to their moral improvement, he sought by precept and example to encourage thrift, cleanliness, and order among his neighbours of all persuasions. His rectory was in a nook of the Cappagh demesne, the small farm attached to it was a model of plain, economical good management ; and his garden, though well stocked with useful vegetables, was so small and unpretending, that it could be imitated by any cottager. He cultivated bees, reared poultry, was *au fait* in all the details of a peasant's life, and was always ready to communicate this knowledge.

His influence did much in raising his cottier neighbours in the scale of civilization. I do not

think that such were his favourite pursuits, but he adopted them as part of his duty as a country parson. He was of a high family, and had distinguished himself much in his youth, but the ties of society and the world were broken, that he might become a "servant of servants." Surely, it will be said to him, "Friend, go up higher."

His wife had been some years dead, and his family only numbered his two daughters and himself; they were models of benevolence, and besides being good, they were more accomplished than one could have expected, living in such retirement. Mrs. More had been as a mother to them since their own parent's death, and in all things they sought to follow her example. We were a most united society in our little village, unlike most others one has ever read of. There was no *bête noir* amongst us—no shadow could be well within the influence of Mrs. More's sunlight.

On the Sunday I am chronicling, we met, as was our weekly wont, in the church-yard after service. Mrs. More asked me to finish the day, I had so unsociably begun with them.

The Miss Hydes always spent Sunday afternoon with her, and their father was to join us at dinner, for before then he had many visits to

pay—congratulatory visits on the recurrence of the weekly festival. We had not walked far up the avenue, when we were joined by the two strangers, who had been strolling about, admiring the lie of the grounds. Mr. Schelling looked older and more careworn, than by the candle-light on the preceding evening, I had imagined him to be, and there was something anxious and unquiet too about his expression, more evident by daylight. After their introductions to the young ladies, we all walked on abreast, taking up the broad avenue with our large party.

A man, one of the villagers, came up hat in hand to Cathal and asked, “if he might get the key of the summer-house, as he would be obliged for leave to show it to some of his friends; and, if his honour had no objection, he hoped they might have a little party in it.”

“It is in your territories, mother,” said Cathal. “What do you say?”

“By all means,” said Mrs. More, in answer to a bow from the farmer, “I hope you will enjoy yourselves. I am sure you will be careful, Reilly, not to let my flowers be injured, or allow any mischief.”

“Of course not, madam, I am greatly obliged to you.” And he walked away, looking much

gratified; for a kindness like this engages an Irishman's gratitude more than even a solid benefit which does not speak to his feelings.

"I did not know, mother," said Cathal, "that you would allow, or encourage these kind of amusements on Sunday."

"I will not say that I do," answered his mother, "for 'amusements' admit of so many varieties. I think the dissipation which always injures, is also prejudicial on Sunday, but innocent recreation is suited to the day."

"But, dear Mrs. More," said Miss Catherine Hyde, "is not the fourth Commandment equally binding as the others?"

"Certainly," answered Mrs. More, reverently. "And in that fourth commandment, I think we may see provision made for the future Christian festival, which we have united to the Sabbath; we do not find in it any injunction against rejoicing, or enjoying pleasure on that day. But the question could not arise if people would only consider that pleasure, or rather happiness, if based on right, (though not always attainable,) is one of the ends of religion. The Puritans have much to answer for, in clothing our English national faith with gloom and sadness. Fearful of imitating the Roman Catholic good works,

they adopted instead much of the Jewish ceremonial law, especially the observance of the Jewish Sabbath."

"But do you think the Puritan spirit still has sway in England?" asked Rupert.

"It is long ere prejudices allied with the cause of liberty and religion, the two great agitators of the public mind, can be removed."

"It seems," said Cathal, "as if we could not devote more than one day in the week, in our commercial England, to religious purposes, and so we join the mortifications of Friday, to the Sunday rejoicings; but, mother, how are we to carry this advice of yours into execution? What can we do worth enjoying?"

"We must first honour the festival by eating something, when we go in; I do not know if that will be worth enjoying; and then you must have a walk across country, and show our guests the ruins of Cappagh More, that you may convince them how great we were in the old times that no one knows any thing about," answered Mrs. More smilingly.

"Very well; but, Mr. Schelling, you must consent to stay at least another day, and we will have an expedition through our mountain-pass to the waterfall. Would you like it?" And Cathal turned appealingly to Mr. Schelling.

“You are very kind, and I will give myself the enjoyment of another day in Ireland,” he answered. “We will have our walk to-day.”

They started gaily after our Sunday luncheon—the pleasantest meal generally enjoyed by the best appetite of all the week. I do not know why; I suppose the digestive organs are healthier for the moral exercises we have just gone through at church. It is certainly extraordinary how the morale is connected with the physique:—Compare two children, as nearly equally strong as may be, in their course through life, and it will be seen, if one be influenced by high principle, he will be far healthier than his companion, who does not act from good motives. I mean, supposing them to have run nearly the same track.”

Mrs. More and I remained behind, and not long after, Mr. Hyde joined us; we talked of the strangers, and she told us how very much they had fascinated Cathal—and even herself—but yet she said she could not quite get rid of the painful impression their Unitarianism gave her. At the moment she was most charmed with their agreeability, it came upon her with a chilling feeling, she told us. I quite understood her—I had often felt the same when

attending patients whose death was at hand, and who would not believe it.

At last, the others came home from their walk, just as twilight was settling into a winter night's darkness. Mr. Schelling, Cathal, and Miss Catherine Hyde in one group—Rupert and her sister Agnes following. They were graver than when they set out. There is something peculiarly solemn in the darkness of a winter's evening walk—a soft winter's evening, in which the sympathies of our nature come out all the more warm and fresh from having been iced by the past frosts and snows. This summer in winter is as injurious as are all things that are out of place, and such days remind us somewhat of our national character, which often shows warmth and kindness when it is hurtful and wrong to do so.

Even the gentlemen did not refuse Mrs. More's cup of tea—it really is wonderful how we eat and drink on Sunday—and we gathered round the springing fire. Conversation fell on ghosts and diablerie, for when does not a party of young people naturally recur to the mysterious subject, while they look at the fantastic light a flickering wood fire casts on all round, and the dark back-ground behind? Mr. Schelling was German in his theories and belief in some un-

known agent, which, according to him, accounted for all that seems to ordinary people unaccountable in the mysteries which are daily occurring; and he told us many interesting stories not then published, but which have since appeared in Mrs. Crowe's "Night-side of Nature." This power he maintained was not evil, nor was it new; it had existed since the Creation, but its uses had not yet been fully discovered.

"But," said Cathal, "all other discoveries of the age are in some way tangible. We understand how the wonderful powers of gas and steam, for instance, are evoked. Nothing could be more magical to a man perfectly ignorant of how they were managed, than the ascent of a balloon, or the progress of a locomotive engine. We are let behind the scenes in those cases, and can see how they are shifted; but the wonders of mesmerism seem to occur accidentally and uncertainly, and so they give good cause for a suspicion that they are but clever tricks, or singular coincidences."

"The science of mesmerism is yet in its infancy," Mr. Schelling answered: "we have not yet got command over this unseen power, but that makes nothing against its existence; we do not precisely know in what the polar attraction

of the magnet needle consists, but yet we doubt it not, simply because one petty result is vulgarized to us in the compass."

"Still," replied Cathal, "there is such perfection in machinery and slight of hand now in the world, that I always gave Alexis and Julie credit for more ingenuity than truth."

"I do not, any more than you," Mr. Schelling answered, "believe in many of the public exhibitions of mesmerism. Gulling the public is too tempting and profitable a trade not to have many followers, who do not care how much they injure the cause of truth. Mesmerism is not fit for the public gaze. Its mysteries are ill calculated by their nature for general exhibition. The imperfect results we do sometimes attain, are too uncertain to be generally satisfactory, and even when we succeed, they are too far beyond what is ordinarily deemed possible to be commonly believed."

"In a former age, they were more freely believed," remarked Rupert; "for much of the then called witchcraft may be explained by mesmerism; but all that was then mysterious, was attributed to infernal agencies."

"Yes, and the superstition of those times, and the scepticism of the last century, both worked

against the development of this science," said Mr. Schelling. "I trust our age will prove itself superior to either, and I hope much from the rapid increase of knowledge. The greatest generator of faith in all imaginable possibilities is knowledge; for who that knows the gigantic discoveries, the new powers, the new combinations of matter, which late years have brought forth, must not be forced to believe in the likelihood of still surpassing wonders? Knowledge brings us to the confines of those great fields of untrodden space, over which we see dimly brooding the shapes of future marvels. We are advancing rapidly among them; and shall we not believe in the greatness of what is before us, by the greatness of those we have touched and felt?"

" 'Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers,' " said Mrs. More, half to herself; and she added, aloud, "There is a deeper scepticism hidden under this belief in our unlimited powers for world-work."

Mr. Schelling did not reply; and there was a pause in the conversation, until Cathal said—

"Still one cannot believe the account any man may give of what he thinks he has seen in this unknown land."

"No, not the account of any man, but learned

and clever men have given their testimony to the truth of strange facts produced by mesmerism."

"I never heard a definition of mesmerism," said Mrs. More. "Is the power you speak of, physical or mental?"

"I will try and explain my notion of it," replied Mr. Schelling. "We have always felt that our bodies, while we are in our present existence, have an intimate connexion with our minds—or rather, that part of us which is called our spirit. It has not been ever exactly ascertained in what this connexion consists; but I understand this missing link in the chain of our being, to be magnetism. It belongs to both our material and immaterial parts—our physique and our morale—and is a mediating power between them, uniting their separate creations into one man."

"So you make out this invisible power to be the cause of the singular influence our minds and bodies seem to exercise over each other?" asked I.

"Just so; and as in one man we see the will and mind exercising an extraordinary power over his material part, so I believe the same agents can, through the mediation of magnetism, influence the material part of another man."

“ And could your will produce any effect on one of us ?” I asked.

“ No visible effect, unless, perhaps, I were, by the usual means, to produce a stronger magnetic rapport than at present exists.”

“ There are certainly singular results often produced,” said Mrs. More, “ nor is it wise to be incredulous. If I understand you aright, you say, that there is a third part besides the two, commonly believed to exist in the being of man. This part you say forms the connexion which certainly exists between our mortal and immortal parts ; and what we call mesmerism is, you think, the effect of the action of this part. Whether this be so, is a question for wiser heads than mine ;—but there is certainly some probability in what you say.”

“ It is the solution of the mystery which has seemed most satisfactory to myself,” he replied. “ Of course, when I spoke of an unseen active agency, I did not intend one exterior to man. I should hardly have dared to insult your reason by so largely taxing your faith.”

“ The noblest act of reason is to bow to faith,” Mrs. More replied gravely.

“ I know,” he answered, with a smile, “ that some say there is a void left by our reasoning

powers which faith must fill; but I do not think any one enthusiastic enough to deny that faith must not only be based on, but be bounded by reason. We must understand why and what we believe."

"Do not get metaphysical," exclaimed Cathal, "or we, in this corner, shall be outstripped."

His mother did not reply to Mr. Schelling, and the conversation became general, and on less interesting subjects. The elder stranger asked many questions of Cappagh and of the Mores. He said that he had heard of Cathal's father, from some mutual friends in England, many years ago, and of his high character as an Irish landlord, who had been foremost in the improvement of his tenantry.

The coincidence gained for him almost the welcome of a long-known friend—for praise of Mr. More was to his widow and his son ever a passport to their kindness; and, before we separated for the night, Cathal had laid bare to his guest most of his wishes and plans for the well-being of his people—his clan, I had almost said; for the feeling of clanship had been much cultivated between his ancestors and their poorer neighbours, and united them by a closer bond than leases and rents.

CHAPTER III.

NEARLY a week passed after that Sunday evening, before I had again an opportunity of visiting Cappagh House, but I occasionally saw Cathal and his guests, as, riding or driving, they passed through the village. I was surprised that Mr. Schelling delayed so long to go, as he had said, the evening of his arrival, that he was in haste to return to London. I was curious to know the cause, so I walked up on the Thursday following to see Mrs. More. I found her busy planning a terrace, which was, she told me, to connect the drawing-room side of the house, with a grass-garden about five minutes' walk from it, and enjoying with all the delight of a landscape-gardener, the improvement that had been effected, in even the few days she had been at work.

"I have missed you so much Doctor," she said, after our first greeting. "I wanted you to help me in the indulgence of my old fancy. Don't you remember," she continued, "my often telling you how much I wished for this."

“Tell me first, my dear madam,” I said, for a definite plan had hardly then been shaped out of the chaos of felled trees and loose stones which was around, “what it is to be.”

“Don’t you see?” she exclaimed with the astonished air of a planner, who forgets that his scheme is as yet only sketched in his own brain. “It is my long hoped-for terrace. Mr. Schelling has arranged the practical part of the design, and Cathal tells me that his rents have been so well paid, that he insists on my having the use of a splendid sum of money. Before he came of age, I felt it would not be honest to spend his income in such things.”

“I am no great judge,” I replied, “but I am sure from the fall of the ground, a terrace here would be an improvement.”

“Will you get up on that rock, Doctor,” she said, “that will be about its height when it is finished.”

With some difficulty and sundry injuries to my best suit, which it never recovered, I did as I was desired, and I was certainly well repaid by a new view of my favourite part of the grounds. It was different in its character from that of the front, which I have described. I have said the Park lay on the side of a mountain, but the

house was, however, situated on the top of the first ascent, and immediately behind it a deep gorge, or chamber, was formed by a mountain-torrent ; which gathered into a little tarn under the drawing-room windows, picturesquely walled in by overhanging rocks. Escaping through them on the side of the valley, the stream fell sheer down a height of about thirty feet, dashing its spray over the mountain ash and natural birch which clung to the steep side of the ravine. A mist hung like smoke over it, and when the sun shone up the little glen, a rainbow spanned it for hours. The terrace was to command a view of this scene, and from it, one could look into the depths of the gorge over the trees which had hitherto intercepted the view. Though they were not now in leaf, the hoar frost gave them softness, and the long icicles hanging from the branches near the waterfall gleamed and sparkled in the light.

I admired the scene in silence, for I always feel that the nameless charm of natural beauty ceases, when we try to praise it. There is a meaning in the old stories of fairy enchantments which a mortal word could disperse. It is so with many of our most refined pleasures ; above all, our love of what is beautiful.

“ Have we not cause to be glad of Mr. Schel-

ling's visit," said Mrs. More—his son had been assisting her when I joined them, but he had remained with the workmen when we ascended the little height to see the view. "He arranged it all," she continued, "and he seems to have excellent taste, indeed he excels in all that we have seen him undertake. My son enjoys his society very much."

There is always, I believe, a smart of jealousy in an old friend's mind, when he finds some chance acquaintance suddenly favoured.—I said, drily :

"Your first impression was not so pleasant."

"The charm of his manner," she replied more gravely, "has sometimes made me forget his principles; however, as Cathal takes him out shooting and over his estate, I have not seen much of him except in the evenings. His son has been my chief companion."

"And is he as pleasing as his father?" I asked.

"He is not nearly so clever," she answered, "but young as he is, his tone of thought seems pitched so high that I cannot but admire him."

"It is singular, I said, "how in all sects bright examples of excellence exist."

"Yes," she replied, "but surely most so among Catholics; in the darkness of error, the few noble examples which do appear, show more brightly

than if they were in the sun-light of our truth."

"And yet," I said, "at first sight it appears that such instances deserve all the more admiration, for even glimmering through the darkness which is about them."

"I cannot think it so strange as some do, that we should see moral excellence among the 'barbarous people,' for all possess within them the faculty of perceiving natural religion, which is the ground work of revelation."

"And do you think," I asked, with some curiosity, as it was a question which had often perplexed me, "that those who attain the moral excellence you speak of, will be hereafter ranked with those who have taken no pains to do right?"

"I could not think so," she replied, "though this subject is involved in the doubt which hangs over our future; but of one thing I feel convinced, that however those who are in ignorance of revealed religion may be judged, there is little excuse for men who, in an enlightened country, and a christianized age, still remain in glaring error."

"Then you consider the position of your guests to be a dangerous one?" I asked.

"I fear so, if indeed they hold in all things the Unitarian tenets."

“ And do you not think such condemnation uncharitable ? ”

“ Can condemnation of false doctrine be too strong ? ” she replied, “ we cannot certainly know how far men may hold these doctrines, and it is right to ‘ believe all things good ’ of our neighbour ; but it seems to me a wrong timidity which shrinks from acknowledging the evil of those who reject the advantages offered by their living in a Christian country. ”

A rustling among the trees below us interrupted our conversation, and a moment after Cathal’s head and shoulders showed through the copse, as he actively climbed up the steep ; Mr. Schelling, his companion, chose an easier way, but both were soon at our side, well loaded with woodcocks and snipe, which they had met during their walk.

“ Well, Doctor, ” exclaimed Cathal, when he had recovered breath enough to speak. “ How do you like our new work ? Do you think it an improvement ? ”

“ Certainly, when such a view as this is gained. ”

“ To please me, ” said Mrs. More, “ though this is very pretty, I like beauty on a larger scale, the view from the hall-door, for instance. ”

“ Yet that has no striking feature, ” said Mr. Schelling.

“Perhaps few people would agree with me,” replied Mrs. More, “but I like the unobtrusive scenery, which has no particular points, as it were, demanding attention. I don’t like what are called ‘views.’ A tourist would most likely think scarce looking at, what I most admire, a wild broad moor, for instance, undulating in purple waves.”

“I think I know what you mean,” said Mr. Schelling, “a kind of limitless beauty which you cannot lay hold of, or say it is here, or it is there, because it is everywhere, and pervades the whole scene. It is the beauty of the sea, not the beauty of a cliff, or bay.”

“That is partly my meaning,” she answered, “one grows tired of a ‘pretty view,’ though it at first pleases the taste for graceful outlines. When we cannot see the end of a broad expanse, it does not tire.”

“No,” said Rupert, “one may be tired of one’s own finite capacity, but never of immensity.”

“One may lose oneself in it, however,” said his father, “and that is just as bad.”

“I, and your son,” said Mrs. More, turning to him, “were debating after you left us this morning, whether there should be, at the end of the terrace, a gravel slope, or steps with a balustrade.”

“The latter plan by all means,” he answered,

“gravel would be washed off a hill-side like this.”

“That will exceed our estimate, I fear,” she replied, “anything of cut stone is so expensive.”

“But do not think of that—common mason-work covered with cement can be made to imitate Portland stone wonderfully.”

She shook her head ; “I have an old-fashioned rule, Mr. Schelling, never to allow any false seeming even in mason-work. It seems to me the most excellent pretence is a deformity.”

“No one could distinguish the imitation I speak of.”

“That is all the worse, your pseudo stone-pillars would be positive cheating,” said she, half-laughingly.

“I confess,” he replied, “I am one of the school who think in such a matter, any means that produced the desired effect are allowable.”

“But besides the question of truth,” said Mrs. More, “is it not selfish only to work for ourselves? Most of these architectural falsehoods can only maintain their fair-seeming for a generation ; then, at least, we shall be found out, and our descendants will undo with contempt the ruins of our works.”

“After all, what harm will be done ; the school of design will have improved, our children will know better how to work for themselves, than if

we had cumbered them with our lasting mistakes.”

“Perhaps they may know how to build roofs and walls quickest and cheapest. I fear, however, the increasing restlessness of men is bad for the spirit of true art in architecture.”

“What! do you think the increased knowledge, gained by travelling, can injure any art? Is not our taste refined: are not our prejudices removed?”

“And we get a ‘little learning’ on subjects of which the common sort of men can know but very little; we profess our opinions all the more strongly that they are erroneous, and the architect, either to make money or a name, forsakes the bent of his own genius, if he have one, to follow the dictum of the crowd. Now a builder, in the middle ages, worked to satisfy his own instinct of beauty. I fear the ‘useful knowledge’ of the many, is a sad fetter to the genius of individuals.”

“I cannot join you in disliking knowledge to be widely spread,” answered Mr. Schelling, “for it often leads to great attainments, and travelling and seeing are one of the best ways to acquire it. Even in building, whose taste is not the better for having seen St. Peter’s?”

“But we become too cosmopolitan to love our

homes and native towns, with the deep-seated affection which formerly inspired their inhabitants. They worked, not with lath and plaister but in the hardest stone to be had, for they were earnest men, and loved excellence more than mere vulgar applause. Such buildings remind us of the past, and lead on our minds to the future. Repose is their chief characteristic, and a calm heedlessness of passing events, which could scarcely exist with the restless seeking for present utility, now rife in the world."

"Yet, surely, my dear madam," said Mr. Schelling—and, as he spoke, I fancied I detected a slight sneer in his manner—"those exalted ideas of art will scarcely prevent your consulting your own convenience about the terrace-steps."

"You laugh at my earnestness in so small a matter," said Mrs. More, somewhat gravely; "and yet, I fear, if we did not use our right principles even in trifles, they would rust in the scabbard."

"Can you imagine how far my mother carries her refinement?" said Cathal. "I ordered a carved frame, for the mirror of her morning room, of gutta percha, in imitation of oak. It would have been thought an improvement on the present old-fashioned wooden one; but when

she saw it she begged me to return it to the maker, because it was ‘a pretence,’ she said.”

“I had many doubts about my rightfulness, however,” answered his mother, affectionately ; “for the kindness which prompted you, was, at least, not ‘a pretence.’ ”

During our conversation, we had walked towards the house, and as it was nearly dark, I prepared to leave them at the hall-door, but both Cathal and his mother pressed me so warmly to join their dinner-party, that I willingly stayed. The gentlemen commenced a discussion on shooting and dogs, so I followed Mrs. More to the drawing-room.

“How well Mr. Schelling seems to suit your son !” I said, when we were alone. “Have you heard anything more of who and what he is ?”

“Nothing, except that he is a rich London merchant—he said something the night of his arrival, of his having known my husband—and, I have an indistinct remembrance of having heard the name of Schelling before now, but, with what connected, I cannot call to mind.”

“It is singular,” I said, “how we see, as in your son’s case, sudden sympathies and antipathies unaccountable to others.”

“And, sometimes,” she added, “these meetings of unknown friends and enemies precede changes in our views and actions. I have, at least, thought I could trace strange effects from these sudden friendships. I cannot quite approve of my son’s admiration for all that his new friend says and does,” she continued, gravely.

I saw that she was annoyed, and, as I was an old and privileged friend, I ventured to ask if she had any urgent cause for disapproving of Mr. Schelling.

“I am what the world calls bigotted,” she replied, “and I do not think strong ties should exist between persons so opposed in the principles of their conduct, as, I trust, my son, and a Unitarian would be. He seems singularly anxious to propagate his belief, and to preach, what I esteem very false doctrines of toleration. I fear, lest my son should be imbued with them, for anything, however far from the reality, which but bears the title of religious liberty is attractive to Cathal.”

“And have you heard Mr. Schelling advance such theories?”

“Many of his remarks tend that way, and Cathal seems to have adopted some of his notions, which, I don’t think he formerly held; but, my

fears may be groundless—a mother's ear is quickly alarmed."

"It is not likely," I said, "that your son, at his age, and having seen so much of the world, should swerve from his settled convictions."

"I don't think, what is called 'seeing much of the world' at all fixes principle. Men travel, and a great deal of knowledge is undoubtedly forced in by their eyes and ears, but the very quantity they see and hear makes it the more difficult for them to put it in order, and draw their own conclusions from it."

"Truly," I agreed, "they do get a farrago of opinions, and 'a dust of systems and of creeds' collected from all classes and all nations, and seldom decide, or even try to discriminate which is the best of all the theories or practices which they have seen in action."

"It should be quite otherwise," she replied; "but, I think, now-a-days, in proportion as men have grown active bodily, their thoughts have been left asleep. There is such a rage and fashion of haste in the world, that our thoughts, when we travel, are mostly employed in considering how we may go fastest. We learn to travel now-a-days, instead of travelling to learn."

"And yet," said I, and I spoke from personal

recollection of having been often unceremoniously contradicted by these scamperers through the world, "one hears strong opinions on the most puzzling foreign questions, from those who have spent a summer or two in steam-boats and railway-carriages."

"In their hurry," she replied, "they can only look at that side of the matter which happens to present itself to their pre-conceived notions—What can they gain but prejudices?"

"They think themselves very enlightened travellers, if they look at all," I said; "and, after all, one can scarcely expect Lord So-and-so and his tutor, and families of 'stuck up people' to do much more."

"It is strange how we get into a conventional way of not 'expecting' people to be wise, and not recognising that they are responsible both for thought and opinion. My son has, however, I think, learned and thought much, and I am far from fearing that what I have said applies to him."

"You have, truly, no reason," I said earnestly; "he is, I think, all that you could wish. I know not a more promising young man—Promising! he is performing his early promise."

"And, yet," she said—and paused. I waited

for her to continue. "I fear he is weak," she went on ; " easily led by those around him. He takes his opinions too much from those of his companions, without inquiring for himself."

"I think you find fault," said I, " with what is but an excellence in him. He acknowledges that he can yet learn much from his fellow-men ; the contrary is too frequently seen."

"To do so is wise, but not to follow blindly the leading of others. We must think, as we shall be judged, by ourselves."

Though I would not appear to agree with Mrs. More lest I might increase her anxiety, I could not but think the same of Cathal, and yet it was not that he was weak: his indecision arose more from a constitutional indolence of his mind, for, once roused, I had seen him resolute enough in opposing wrong.

The dressing-bell disturbed our conversation, and nothing worth recording marked the rest of the evening. Mrs. More and Rupert conversed much together, while the elder Mr. Schelling and Cathal spoke of Irish affairs, and the intricate questions connected with the management of landed property.

I was glad to see that Rupert had interested my friend, for, even during the slight acquaint-

ance I had had with him, I had been pleased by his quiet and unobtrusive, yet earnest manner.

At the close of the evening, he and his father bade adieu to Mrs. More, for they had arranged to start early the following morning ; and, at half-past seven, I saw their carriage passing through the village, from my window. My early rising gained for me a graceful bow from Mr. Schelling, and a quieter one from Rupert, in which I felt there was more real kindness.

CHAPTER IV.

THE following Sunday, I again saw my friends at Cappagh, as I always spent the afternoon of festivals with them.

There had been a violent storm the night before, and all nature looked desolate; the last flowers had been blown away; the last leaves had fallen, leaving no promise of more; dead branches lay on the avenue, impeding the way, for, as it was Sunday, no labourer had been employed to remove them. The clouds covered the sky, leaving no break, and without even a shade of lighter colour to give hope they might rise. The wind seemed to have entirely passed away, and gone on to a farther country, except when a gust, which had been caught in some corner, or round one of the old trees, rose, and swept mournfully after its companions. The whole dreary scene reminded me of what, in practice, I had often seen, affliction falling on a worldly mind, and sweeping away the dead flowers and

sere branches of present hopes and pleasures. A summer-storm is like Christian sorrow: when it is past, the landscape rises as if from a bath, softened and smiling, the air is purified, and the flowers quickly grow again in the room of their broken fellows; all shows signs of improvement and increased life. After the winter wind, nothing is left but destruction—it worketh unto death.

I had seen a large party in the More pew at church, so I was not unprepared to find Cathal's room full of gentlemen, with one or two of whom I had been before acquainted. Sir Hamilton Savage bowed distantly to me as I entered; he was a distant connection of the Mores, and I had frequently met him at Cappagh, but he thought further greeting needless to a dispensary doctor. There were also Mr. Guy de Burgh, a gentleman living in our country, and two Hussar Officers from ———, to whom Cathal introduced me as Major Wyndham and Mr. Amyot Parks, belonging to the same regiment, but very different in both manner and appearance. Major Wyndham was dark, and would have been very handsome, but for a certain superciliousness of expression. His eyebrows were arched, as if he kept his eyes open only by an effort; and, after a slight acknowledgment of my introduc-

tion, he remained silently lounging before the fire, one hand deep in his pocket, while the other played with his whiskers and moustaches. Mr. Parks, on the contrary, nervously started when I entered the room, and abruptly held out his hand, drawing it back and blushing, when he perceived that I was a stranger. His hair and whiskers were of a whity-brown colour, peculiar to haberdashers' parcels; indeed, that was his pervading colour, only relieved by his large, bright blue, expressionless eyes.

"I think my mother would be glad if you joined her," said Cathal, who saw readily enough that I should enjoy her society more than that of his visitors.

I found Mrs. More in her morning-room, and alone; she received me with her usual kindness.

"You have a large party," I said, after our first words of greeting. "Are there any ladies?"

"Yes, Mrs. de Burgh, and Miss Savage, and the two dear children from the Rectory."

"It was too wet for you to go to church this morning?" I asked.

"I have had a cold since the evening we stood out so late on the new terrace, and I must imprison it for a day or two."

“Are Major Wyndham and Mr. Parks friends of your son’s?” I asked.

“No, he met them accidentally at ——, and, as they spoke very disconsolately of the dullness of the neighbourhood, he asked them to come here. I do not think either of them very agreeable, but that may be my own fault.”

“Surely,” I said, “such opposites must either of them be pleasant in some way.”

“One cannot but perceive that Major Wyndham is ridiculing every thing Irish.”

“But you do not mind that,” I said.

“It is disagreeable to feel that one has not succeeded in giving pleasure to a guest.”

“I do not know,” said I, “why it is, that men like this Major Wyndham, are always made so much of in Ireland.”

“There is no *esprit de corps* among most of us, and we fancy we can no better prove our superiority than by our intense admiration of an Englishman, of Major Wyndham’s class, of course joining him in his laughter at anything peculiar to us.”

“And yet it is a pity,” I said, “that there should be such a mania among us of having every thing *à l’Anglaise*; however superior their nationality may be to ours, we make a sad hybrid of

our character, when we graft their customs and ideas on it."

"Neither Cathal nor I admire satire; he would not have asked Major Wyndham, had he known that it was a characteristic of his."

"What do you think of Sir Hamilton Savage and his daughter?" I asked. "He is especially severe to Irish faults, though an Irishman."

"It is unlucky that he should meet Major Wyndham. When he is only with plain Irishmen, he forgets to show off."

"These are very different from your last guests," said I.

"Very," she echoed; "yet, however we may enjoy the society of intellectual people, one must seek rather for goodness in one's companions."

"Yet talent is such a means of great works."

"Still, without goodness, it is a poor possession. Born of earth, it exercises itself on earthly things, and looks not beyond them. What place will talent hold in our future? Genius, even, though ever seeking for something better than earth can afford, yet cannot satisfy itself. Goodness alone is unchangeable and always to be prized."

It was pleasant to see Mrs. More's countenance when she spoke of such matters; she looked

so thoroughly imbued with that goodness she praised.

“But where do you find good people?” I said. There was truly one before me, but where were her equals?

“Goodness in all,” she said; “and we are devoid of the love of it, if we do not seek for it, and encourage the germ of it, in whoever we may have companionship with.”

Our conversation was interrupted by Cathal, who joined us, he said, to have a few minutes of relief before dinner. “I am bored to death with these people, this wet day; you look interesting and interested—great contrasts to those I have left. They are each drawing out the worst propensity of his companion; Sir Hamilton is on six-foot stilts before Wyndham, and they are all making a butt of Parks, except De Burgh, who looks afraid to join, lest they should turn and make one of him.”

“You don’t like your new acquaintances, then?” I asked.

“Wyndham ought to have something in him,” he replied; “I met his brother in Syria, and he was a very good fellow; Parks seems a ninny. I said something about ‘the house that Jack built,’ and he wanted to know who Jack

was, and if he lived near here? Then Wyndham told him that it was in this country that 'three children slid on ice, all on a summer's day,' and the rest of the rhyme, appealing to Sir Hamilton, as an Irishman, if it were not so. It was excellent to see him imitating Wyndham's quiet manner, and saying, 'Really, not having been much in Ireland, I don't know many of the country stories.'"

"Come in," said Mrs. More, in answer to a knock at the door.

The Miss Hydes came in.

"We thought you were alone, dear Mrs. More, or we should not have disturbed you."

"Have you really walked up?" exclaimed Cathal, seeing their bonnets and shawls.

"It is fine now," Miss Hyde said, "and we know our way so well; a little darkness does not signify. We took your message to papa; he says he cannot come to-night, but he will to-morrow."

"You must go and take off your damp clothes at once," said Mrs. More; "it is time to dress."

"Is it really so late? have we missed our evening half hour?" said Agnes Hyde.

"You have indeed, and now you must prepare to help me to entertain our guests," said Mrs. More.

The drawing-room at Cappagh was never very brightly lighted before dinner, so I had not a distinct view of Miss Savage till we went into the dining-room. I was curious about her, for I had often heard of her, and knew many of her connexions. We sat opposite to each other, and I was much diverted at observing the customs of a thorough "young lady," as she certainly was. Her dress seemed, to my inexperienced eye, to be very smart, and she had pretty features; but they were all long and pointed: her nose was pointed, her elbows were pointed, she had points all over her, and they were all red; still she possessed the glitter of good society, and that is very dazzling to a "harmless villager" like myself.

I have not described the Miss Hydes; they were like each other, for both had fair hair and calm blue eyes, but the elder, Agnes, was the more beautiful, and, though she resembled her sister, it was with an idealized likeness. If Catherine's eyes were the colour of forget-me-nots, Agnes' were like "the forget-me-nots of the angels." Catherine's brilliant colour proved her excellent health, Agnes' beauty looked immortal, as if health or sickness could scarce interfere to change it. Catherine's figure might be called

by some luxuriant ; Agnes' did not come into any particular class ; it was simply beautiful.

On this occasion, they wore wreaths of ivy-leaves twined in their hair. Catherine looked a Bacchante ; Agnes a Sybil. The difference in their appearance agreed with the difference in their characters, and perhaps was caused by it, for I have always observed that the mind influences the exterior form. Perhaps the perfecting of the Without in a future state, will be but the consequence of the purified interior of our being ; and Agnes' mind was as much more akin to the Ideal as her form was. They had many tastes in common, yet the elder sister's was ever the most refined. Catherine, for instance, loved caricature, and enjoyed the Dutch school of art, but Agnes had a positive aversion for any distortion or ugliness ; and, when she took a likeness or sketched from nature, she cast upon her drawing the beauty of her mind. They both sang ; Catherine, the sparkling florid songs of modern Italian masters ; Agnes, the cold, stately, "solemn music" of former centuries. Catherine was a pleasant companion on a fresh spring day ; Agnes sorted best with summer twilight.

Major Wyndham was late for dinner, and a servant was sent three times to announce it to

him ; at last, he took his place, and very deliberately went through the courses he had missed, in silence, until hearing the word hunting, he asked,

“ Is there not a hunt in Ireland ? I heard of one in Kil— something or another.”

“ You mean Kilkenny, perhaps,” said Cathal.

“ Yes, that is the name ; is it anywhere near here ?”

“ The town of Kilkenny is about fifty miles off.”

“ And do you ride fifty miles to hunt ? I’ve done that in South Africa, but then there was some sport at the end.”

“ There certainly is nothing to do in Ireland,” said Sir Hamilton Savage, in a deprecating tone of voice.

“ Perhaps not, for some tastes,” remarked Mrs. More.

“ I can’t conceive how people can exist in this stupid country,” he continued.

“ I manage it,” said Cathal, “ though I’ve spent ten years in other scenes of the world. I have come to the conclusion, after all, that we abuse Ireland only because we want to be in the fashion !”

“ It is very odd,” said Major Wyndham, “ how Irish people always fail in their efforts to attain to it, though they sacrifice every thing to fashion !”

Miss Savage seemed discomposed at hearing

this verdict from one to whom she looked up as so good a judge, and her father instantly began a discussion on the origin of different Irish families with Mrs. More, proving that his had certainly only settled in Ireland within the last hundred years.

“Of all the people I have met in Ireland,” said Major Wyndham, “the most absurd are the would-be Anglo-Irish.”

Mrs. More tried good-naturedly to change the subject, (for a round table made the conversation general; and Miss Savage, notwithstanding her *à plomb* looked uncomfortable,) and said, “You, Mrs. de Burgh, are fresh from the perfect country, which England seems to be, and yet you can give a tolerably good account of us.”

“Oh yes,” answered the quiet little lady, “Ireland has many advantages over England; the people are so obliging, and there are scarcely any taxes.”

Major Wyndham turned towards her, when he heard her English accent; but her remark seemed to check in him any desire to make her further acquaintance, for he relapsed into silence, and said little more during dinner-time.

“Are you going immediately to Leamington?” asked Cathal of Miss Savage, to break the pause.

“We are, for papa’s old friend, the Duke of

——, is to be there next week, and they would not miss each other on any account.”

“Did you not know our neighbour, Mr. O’Neil?” said Mrs. More; “he was there last winter.”

“Papa would not allow me to be introduced to him; he never likes getting among Irish people in England, and anybody whose name began with an ‘O’ was suspicious.”

“That was a pity!” said Mrs. More, smiling; “he is very much to be liked, and he has nearly eleven thousand a-year, two beautiful places in Ireland, and a shooting-lodge in the Highlands.”

“Oh, how charming the Highlands are!” exclaimed Miss Savage; “we spent a month at the Duke of A——’s this autumn, and I enjoyed deer-stalking so much.”

“I tried deer-stalking when we were quartered in Scotland,” said Mr. Parks, who sat next Mrs. More; “but I could not stand the fatigue, and I am subject to a giddiness in my head.”

No one seemed to sympathize with him, for his complaint was left unanswered; indeed, conversation languished sadly, and I began to speculate on when the ladies would move. Mr. Parks, I think, was similarly occupied; for when at length Mrs. More made the appointed signal,

he rushed with great alacrity to open the door, but catching his feet in a stray napkin, he fell, to the amusement of some of the ladies who were passing at the moment, and the pity of the amiably disposed. Mrs. de Burgh said—"Poor man! I hope he is not hurt," and moved on. Miss Savage, with quiet indifference, asked Agnes if she did not think the night cold. Catherine looked curiously at him for a moment, and afterwards showed me an excellent sketch of his attitude, and Mrs. More alone stopped to help him up, and heard his confession.

"That dreadful giddiness! it is always getting me into scrapes."

I was among the first to go to the drawing-room, where I found Mrs. More and Mrs. de Burgh conversing on plans for cottages for the poor, which the latter lady proposed to ornament with chrysanthemum plants and passion-flowers. Miss Savage was rather absently watching Catherine, who was sketching absurd figures with a pen and ink on a sheet of paper; amongst which I saw Miss Savage's own many-peaked form, unrecognised, however, by its original. Agnes was looking over a book of etchings, or rather she was gazing at one dreamily. It was a St. Joseph and the infant Saviour, by Guercino.

"That is an odd, coarsely done print," said Miss Savage. "Have you seen the new Book of Beauty? It only arrived on Friday, at Lord Atherly's; but we had time to look over it before we left."

It was a very disenchanting speech. The rest of the gentlemen came in at the moment, which prevented Miss Savage from attending to Miss Hyde's reply. Catherine shut up her drawings hastily.

"Do let me see them," said Mr. Parks, who thought it a duty to look at what ladies were doing!

"I was only sketching some scenes, scarcely worth remembering," she replied.

"You have a box of letters, I see," said Miss Savage; "do you ever give words to each other?"

"We have played so often with each other," replied Agnes, "that I think we have exhausted our stock of difficult words—you will, however, contribute some new ones."

"A game!" said Mr. Parks; "how do you do it?"

There was a despairingness about his accent which amused me. He seemed to live under a

constant depression of spirit, and his eyes helped the idea, for they were weak and tender.

“ You had better try,” said Major Wyndham. “ If you *can* spell a word, pick out the letters which form it, and give them in a handful to somebody else, that is all.”

Mr. Parks began to do as he was told.

“ Don’t you see ?” said Major Wyndham ; “ you publish the word you are thinking of, if you choose the letters in their consecutive order.”

After a silence of some moments, Mr. Parks exclaimed, still more dolefully than before—

“ I can’t do it. How can you expect a man to spell backwards ?”

Cathal, who had joined us, did not quite like to have a guest of his laughed at, so he asked for some music.

“ I don’t know any sacred music,” said Miss Savage, “ and, I suppose, nothing else is allowable on Sunday.”

“ You’ll sing something ?” said Cathal, looking relieved, and turning to Miss Hyde.

“ Yes, if Mrs. More wishes,” was the quiet answer. Consent was readily gained ; and in a few moments her voice arose, softly and mysteriously at first, but gradually increasing, until the mellow sound filled the whole room with a burst

of praise and joy, gradually dying away, while the accompaniment was heard, like the quivering of many wings in rapid flight.

"Thank you, my love," whispered Mrs. More, bending over Agnes; "you have made us remember that this is Christmas eve."

"Anything of Donizetti's?" asked Sir Hamilton; "young ladies all rave about his music."

"Were you in London last summer?" asked Major Wyndham. "Gluck's Orfeo had quite beaten the modern Italian school out of the field."

"Of course, I was—Gluck—a German fellow, is he not? I saw him at Lord Hundon's; he has a white moustache, I think."

Major Wyndham arched his eyebrows a little, as he replied—

"Really, a good ghost-story! or, perhaps, you are a clairvoyant, Sir Hamilton."

"By the way," interrupted Cathal, anxious to change the subject, "I begin to believe there is something in mesmerism; I have been half persuaded by a Mr. Schelling, who has been staying here, and is one of the cleverest men I ever met."

"Rather a rarity in this country," said Major

Wyndham; "one does not often meet people one can talk to."

"Yet there is no lack of both clever and agreeable conversation; where can the fault lie?" quietly remarked Mrs. More.

He looked surprised, and for the rest of the evening he was much more pleasing than before. I heard a few words between him and Sir Hamilton Savage afterwards, which pleased me. Sir Hamilton said—

"Surely, my dear fellow, you won't stay long here: you will find it fearfully Irish. We go in a day or two."

"I think I shall begin to enjoy myself very much in a day or two," Major Wyndham replied.

I confess I enjoyed the rebuff, and the implied praise of my friends at Cappagh.

CHAPTER V.

THE following morning was bright and sunny, whitened by a severe frost, which had followed the storm. I was glad to see its wholesome face, for I have lived long enough to become a firm believer in the truth of the old saying—"A green Christmas makes a full churchyard." How true old sayings are ! How true what is handed down through long ages always is ! Time destroys what is false, but sets his seal as a witness to truth ; and it is from this belief, and not from prejudice, that I delight to read old books, and trust them rather than new ones, in spite of the "march of intellect," I hear so loudly trumpeted on every side.

The More pew was filled to overflowing by their guests. Mr. Hyde gave us an excellent sermon, eloquent, yet plain ; and Major Wyndham, as he listened, again arched his eyebrows and looked astonished, and after church, I heard him say to Cathal—

“Is not that an Englishman who preached?”

“No,” he replied; “Mr. Hyde is Irish.”

“It is the first sermon I have heard, in Ireland, which had not some allusion to the errors of Roman Catholics.”

“Yet some of our clergy are liberal enough.”

“Don’t say liberal, my dear Cathal,” said Mrs. More. “It is such a hackneyed, disgraced word.”

“I have been to hear some of your popular preachers,” continued Major Wyndham; “and I have been astonished at their prejudice and intemperate language. My mother was a Roman Catholic, and equal to, if not better, than any one I ever knew, and it sounds strange to me to hear professors of her creed so abused.”

“I wish that such preachers were more convinced of the truth that true Catholicism has no party—it is universal.”

“But they totally disclaim the title of Catholic,” replied Major Wyndham. “I heard a clergyman say, from the pulpit, that ‘Anglo-Catholics were but bad Protestants;’ and he declaimed against putting the cross on any building, or, indeed, allowing its use anywhere, because to do so, was a custom of the Roman church. Unfortunately, for the reverend gentle-

man's wishes, every line intersecting another, produces a cross."

"Irreverend gentleman! you should rather call him," interrupted Cathal, warmly, "so to speak of the universal symbol of our faith."

"*We* must be Catholic, at all events," said Mrs. More, "and make allowance for the excitement of party."

"In a merely political point of view," said Cathal, "it is ruin to a country to have it distracted by religious controversies. I think every one who encourages, or even goes to hear violent preachers on either side, is deeply injuring his fatherland."

"But then, I suppose, if your 'staunch Protestant' defenders slackened in their attack, their opponents would reap an easier victory."

"What of that?" exclaimed Mrs. More. "If all Ireland became Pagan, in consequence of our acting right, we must still persevere. I think, however, more forbearance on the part of the Anglican-Irish, would produce a happier state of things among us."

"I quite agree with you, mother," said Cathal; "toleration is truly the virtue most needed in this age of many sects."

“Yes, but not at a sacrifice of our own principles,” she replied, gravely.

“I think toleration should influence us yet farther,” he replied; “how can we be certain we are right?”

“How can we live uncertain?” his mother replied. “Life is given, that we may read and learn, and be certain.”

“But,” said Major Wyndham, “surely doubts will ever exist. It seems to me, that we are often certain on such intricate points, because we are too lazy to examine them.”

“I think it is generally that very indolence,” said Mrs. More, “which produces doubts. If we use the powers we possess, in sincerity, we shall probably come to some decision.”

“And if a wrong one?” said her son.

“That is scarce likely, if we have humility. There are, on every side, beacons to lead to truth, held up to us by the great thinkers before us. There is, besides, another guide,” she added reverently.

We had reached the house as she spoke; the rest of the party stood on the door-steps awaiting the decision of their hosts, as to how they should employ the afternoon.

“Any shooting to-day, More?” asked Sir Hamilton.

“Just as you please ; but if it freezes as hard to-night as now seems likely, it would be almost a pity to disturb the covers before to-morrow.”

“Have you good shooting?” asked Major Wyndham.

It was curious how much his manner had changed. The day before, he would have “supposed there was none.” It was settled that the birds should enjoy a Christmas, and we all, even Mrs. More, started for a walk. Mr. Parks alone did not join us, for I heard him complain to Mrs. More that he was suffering from his head, which felt more than usually light that morning !

We had not gone very far, however, on a private road through the park, before we were startled by the sound of a horse galloping violently behind us—we quickly arranged ourselves on either side, to leave free passage for whatever it might be to pass. A moment after, a large, bony, powerful animal, which I recognised as belonging to a horse-breaker in the neighbourhood, came up to us carrying a rider, who was already unseated, and only held on by the mane.

It shyed, first to one side and then to the other, as it went past our two parties, and poor Mr.

Parks, for it was he, overcome by the double motion, came to the ground in a more safe, than dignified attitude.

Cathal picked him up, and we all crowded round to hear how the accident had occurred.

“Why, Parks, you don’t often ride a strange horse,” said Major Wyndham.

“Nor did I intend to, but an Irish ruffian made me.”

“Made you,” repeated Cathal, “how was that?”

“A dreadful man, with a blackened face, met me, and insisted that I should try the vicious brute; he said it was quiet, too. He persisted in his story that I should be ‘killed intirely,’ if I went on walking, because I had this bearskin overcoat on; and he said that all that remained for me was to mount his vile animal. What could I do? they certainly wanted my coat, and it was a dark retired spot, fit for a robbery.”

“You got on the horse, and it ran away, then?” asked Major Wyndham.

“No, that was not all,” said Mr. Parks; “when I was on it, the beast began to kick in a frightful way. I asked the rascal to hold its head, that I might get off. ‘Pay me half-a-guinea, and I will,’ he said, with a fiendish smile that convinced

me of his character ; but as I would not be imposed on, I tried to jump down. Every time I moved, however, the horse plunged. It's very well for you to laugh, Wyndham," he said, suddenly breaking off in his story, "but I'd like to have seen you in my place, and with a cracked rein, too ; you know I can manage my chargers."

"I know the fellow," said Cathal, "he is always playing some trick. I hope you did not pay the money, however."

"I had not any about me. I told the man so, and then he gave a loud whistle ; I did not know but that it was a signal for some companions, so, as it was better to trust to luck than to Whiteboys, I struck the horse, he ran away, and you saw the end."

"It was all a joke," said Cathal ; "I am sure the man did not really intend any harm."

"It is no joke to me, getting such a fall," muttered Mr. Parks ; "my mother told me to avoid falls," he added disconsolately, in a low tone.

"Come and walk with us," said Cathal, "and you will be safe."

"I should prefer returning, but I don't like meeting that fellow again."

"I will walk with you," said Cathal, good-naturedly, "and I will join you again, mother, at the

Monrue gate. Leave a little piece of wood on the top bar, if you pass it before I am there."

"Parks is a good-natured fellow," said Major Wyndham, when we had walked on, "but he is thoroughly weak-headed, and he was spoilt by his mother; he is a great annoyance to me, for he gives me the trouble of pitying him; if he were less of a fool, one would not care about his troubles, he might shift for himself."

"Yet a wise man feels misfortunes more," said I.

"Perhaps, but it is my feelings, not other people's, I am thinking of; at any rate, pray don't disarrange my ideas, it is such a bore putting them in order again."

"I no longer wonder at the doubts you spoke of this morning," said Mrs. More.

"On the contrary," he said, "I avoid doubt, by never thinking on debated questions."

"Yet some day perplexed thoughts will rush in upon you, in spite of your present unthinkingness."

"Do, I entreat, let me enjoy it as long as I may!" he replied.

"Indeed you must not," she said, earnestly. "It is most wrong to neglect so great a talent as thought, the noblest gift we have."

“You are forgetting goodness,” I interposed, “which you so highly exalted the other day.”

“But that is not a talent,” she replied, “it is a direct emanation from above. There may be much or little of it in us, but it is in us, not of us, as our talents are.”

“It is beyond me, evidently,” said Major Wyndham.

“This kind of conversation would suit my friend, Schelling,” said Cathal, who had rejoined us; “by the bye, I have not yet heard, mother, your opinion of him.”

“He was very agreeable, and much cleverer than most people,” she replied, “but I could not approve of his principles.”

“Oh you mean his Unitarianism,” Cathal answered quickly; “but in every thing else, surely you think with me, that he is very superior.”

“In talent, perhaps; what I chiefly disliked in him was a certain second meaning, which seemed to lurk behind all that he said.”

“Why he rather boasts of that,” said her son; “he often says, the strings by which we work our schemes, must be hidden from the world, or they will not succeed.”

“And what are his schemes?”

“Those of which he has spoken to me are

very good, mostly plans for the improvement of the poor ; he is, besides, singularly devoted to religion, and that is respectable in all."

"And do you, an Anglican Catholic, trust his plans for good?"

"Of course, not in theological matters ; still I do not see but that he may be a good guide in present affairs."

"Can we thus separate present from future?" asked Mrs. More.

"Do you mean to say," asked Major Wyndham, who had been listening with interest, "that there is so extremely intimate a connection between them? In every-day occupations, our walk at this moment, for instance, what is there of the future?"

"Even in our walk there may be worship, the worship of thankfulness, which is, perhaps, the most acceptable. 'Catholic' is truly a good name for our religion, for in its universality it enters into our most trifling acts."

"Mr. Schelling told me," said Cathal, "that he had devoted his life to Rupert's advantage. I think his care-worn look may be ascribed to some latent fear, that his son may desert the Unitarian creed."

"He has then adopted a bad plan to retain

him," said Mrs. More. "Habit and prejudice are strong ties; and, as he has neglected them, I scarcely think his son is of a character to follow in his father's steps."

"After all, I think it is only in appearance that Mr. Schelling leaves his son to judge for himself. He did not neglect early impressions, but he knew the tendency young men have to quarrel with systems authoritatively laid down for them."

"System," repeated Mrs. More, "yes, you have called Unitarianism by its right name; but," she continued, "I did not like in your friend the way he adapted every view, every new thought to general expediency. No sooner did he strike out an idea, than he began to consider how it would dovetail into the world's ways; and if it happened to be inconsistent with them, he dismissed it."

"Your notions seem to me too high," said Major Wyndham, "and unattainable by common folk. What is the use of ideas if they are not intended for the service of the world?"

"Granting that to be an object," replied she, "I cannot see how we serve the world by debasing our better thoughts to its level; we injure by so doing both ourselves and it, instead of, by example, helping to raise its standard."

“In that case,” he replied, smiling, “you go into the clouds, and the world forgets you.”

“Some individuals will probably look up and follow you; they will lead others, and so you may originate much good. Even if you only encourage one to rise above the earth-clouds, and seek for truth, is there not something gained?”

“You are a great advocate for ideal truth, and rightly so,” her son replied; “yet consider how usefully Schelling has advanced science. One must at least admire his mechanical knowledge.”

“A very valuable gift to the rest of the world,” said Mrs. More, “and yet I fear, as far as he himself is concerned, it will not enable him to build a bridge, or raise a ladder which will reach to Heaven.”

“Do you know,” said Cathal, after some minutes’ silence, “Miss Savage will be very cross if we do not talk to her, Wyndham.”

“I detest young ladies, and never have any thing to say to them,” was his answer.

“I at least must go on, she is looking back.”

“Go by all means,” said Major Wyndham, at the same time offering his hand to Mrs. More, for the path was rough.

The interruption had diverted our thoughts, and there was little more conversation between

us ; I may say between Mrs. More and Major Wyndham, for I prefer listening to speaking.

The evening was passed as merrily as Christmas time deserved. Major Wyndham exerted himself to please, and perfectly succeeded, for he was singularly clever in small things, and but that he wanted energy and enthusiasm to devote himself to any one pursuit, he possessed all the materials for success in the world. As it was, his talents were squandered on the fancy of the moment.

However, as small attainments, and smatterings of different branches of knowledge, often succeed best in general society, Major Wyndham especially shone when he chose, and on this evening, I think he did his best to make up for his past indifference and scornfulness.

Sir Hamilton followed his example, though his unbending was a very different affair, but amusing too in its way.

Miss Savage no longer refused an introduction to Mr. O'Neil who had arrived, Catherine Hyde was well pleased to caricature and laugh at Mr. Parks, and her sister and Cathal generally enjoyed each other's society. As for the remaining members of the circle, it was generally much the same to them who they met and what they did.

But even perfect pleasure will not keep one awake all night, and towards one o'clock Mr. Hyde yawned.

Mrs. de Burgh looked at him, and followed his example—the yawns became general.

“Now is not that magnetism?” exclaimed Cathal; “why did we all yawn together?”

“Because we were all tired,” said Mr. Hyde; “reaching the same climax of fatigue together!”

“My dear Mr. More, pray do not talk of any thing so horrible as magnetism,” exclaimed Mrs. de Burgh. “I was present at a mesmeric experiment not long ago, and it ended so awfully, I scarcely like to think of it.”

Everybody was anxious to hear more of the story, so Mrs. de Burgh continued, “I will tell it to you, that you may be warned from trying experiments. I was staying at Mr. de Burgh’s brother’s place in the county ——; two nieces of his were of the party, the elder of them was an extremely intelligent, clever person, very well educated, though she was but eighteen, but rather fond of taking up singular theories, and a firm believer in mesmerism. Her sister was a complete contrast; if she were well-informed, she did not appear so; she was reserved and grave in her manner; remarkably common-sensible, and quite

sceptical about phrenology and all those sciences, especially this unfortunate mesmerism. Indeed, she never troubled her head about them, except to laugh at them when they were mentioned. While I was staying there, an old friend of my brother-in-law's arrived, who was an amateur mesmerist. Of course, the merits of his hobby were discussed; most of our party were unbelievers, and Mr. Stanton, for that was his name, offered to show us an example of his skill. Miss Hudson, the elder sister, I have described to you, was enthusiastically anxious to see some one mesmerised; she would not, however, be the subject on whom the experiment was to be made, because she wished to be an observer. Every one was equally curious, and equally unwilling to be operated on, so we ran a risk of having nothing done. At last, Miss Charlotte Hudson, the second sister, said, as she had neither curiosity nor belief, she would do very well for a subject. Mr. Stanton placed her in the usual position, and under his passes she soon became insensible. Her aunt, in whose house she was staying, grew alarmed, and desired her to come to the fire where she was standing, but the young lady did not move. Mr. Stanton, the mesmerist, walked over and told her to follow him; she immediately did so, but in a very rigid unnatural way, and when

she reached the hearth, she said, shivering, ‘It is very cold, tell my aunt that the fire is out.’ It had been let out, while we were watching her. Her aunt became seriously alarmed, and begged Mr. Stanton to restore her to consciousness. He employed the usual means, but ineffectually, and he had to place her in a strong draught between the hall-door and a window, before she at all recovered. At last, her senses returned, though she remained still confused, so much so, that her aunt, to try if she were herself again, asked her to read some pages of a book, which, however, she got through correctly enough. The next morning she breakfasted as usual, and when we asked her if she recollected what had been done to her the night before, she answered, that she remembered nothing about being mesmerised, or any thing of what had occurred.”

“There now,” said Cathal, “who can doubt the powers of magnetism?”

“No one, indeed,” answered Mrs. de Burgh, gravely, “for in three days after, the young lady died from a brain affection, almost certainly caused by this dreadful experiment, as her medical attendant assured us.”

We were all shocked and solemnized by this sad story, and shortly after, we broke up for the night.

CHAPTER VI.

I HEARD on the following Wednesday that most of the strangers had left Cappagh. So as Mrs. More was alone, I walked up to see how she was, for she had complained of cold on the preceding Sunday ; and also to hear how she had liked her guests. It is always pleasant to return to the undisturbed enjoyment of our friends, after they have been separated from us by an intervening crowd of acquaintances, for I do not know any season in which their absence is more felt. I found Mrs. More looking ill, with an expression of disquiet on her countenance which I had never seen before, even in the time of her trouble and sorrow, after her husband's death. She sat in the drawing-room working busily, and I saw the traces of tear-drops on the clothes for the poor, she was cutting out. Her favourite spaniel, Sheelah, seemed to sympathize with her mistress' sorrow, whatever it was, for she was lying close to her, looking up wistfully in her face.

"I fear you have over-exerted yourself, my

dear madam," said I, after some moments of indifferent conversation ; "you do not look very well."

"I do not feel very well," she answered, "but you cannot prescribe for me ; perhaps, however, you will enable me to reconcile myself better to what Cathal is about to do."

"Surely, your son can have given you no cause for anxiety," I exclaimed.

"Cathal himself has not, but Mr. Schelling has infected him with his false theories of toleration. From what my son told me this morning, I learn that Mr. Schelling has asked him to permit, and even to assist in having a Unitarian chapel built here, and I fear Cathal is half-persuaded to consent."

"But your son does not at all agree with Mr. Schelling's creed."

"No, he does not, and, doctor, I should almost hope better for him if he did. It seems to me very wrong to believe in one faith, and encourage the contrary. I would rather he were earnest even in mistaken religion, than indifferent to all."

"My dear madam, your son is far from being indifferent ; it is probably from principles of religion his toleration proceeds."

"They are not the principles of the Christian religion, then," she answered. "We are to be to-

lerant to men, but uncompromisingly opposed to error itself; we cannot support two opposites at once."

"My dear mother," interrupted Cathal, who had come in from his study unperceived, "I may be opposed to error as much as you like, but that is no reason why I should tie down others to my standard, or insist on their thinking a creed to be erroneous, which I may believe to be mistaken."

"But we must not affect neutrality on such a subject," said his mother; "it is our duty to maintain truth, to advance it by every means in our power; we must not stand by, and see error prevail, if we can prevent it."

"But truth, you say yourself, ever must prevail, why then fear the attacks of error?" he said.

"Error cannot injure truth, but it may injure us; we may be lost, while the divine essence proceeds in its eternal existence."

"You say, you said only the other day, men believe for themselves, they are responsible for their own belief; why then not leave them to choose it for themselves? why not put before them the various forms of religion, that they may select what their conscience tells them is best?"

"Simply, because our religion commands us not. We are told that 'Charity' is the first Christian virtue; is it agreeable to Charity to see our

brother led into error, and not try to preserve him? It is surely worse to aid and abet those who seek to lead him astray."

"But I do not believe that our form of religion is the only true one; and, when there are others equally good, why should I intolerantly support only my own?"

"There may be many tolerable forms, though I firmly believe that ours is the best, but there is only one religion, 'one Lord,' 'one faith,' whereby we may be saved. The Unitarians reject this faith. Can we then be justified in exposing our fellow-creatures to be led into such hopeless error as theirs?"

"But if it be such error, no one will fall into it, especially when we have so good a rector to guard our parish. I only say, let truth and falsehood have a fair field, and no favour. Of course, I should be very sorry to see truth beaten, or any of our people become Unitarians; still I do not think it wrong or dangerous to comply, so far as I am required, with Mr. Schelling's wishes."

"When two opposing powers have equally fair claims, that principle may be just, but certainly not, when both natural and revealed religion teach us that whatever is evil is to be checked, and good encouraged."

“But, in fact, persecution always adds zeal and vigour to a sect, and I think false doctrine would often die a natural death, if it was quietly let to run to seed.”

“That may be politic or expedient, but before policy or expediency, or even our consideration of what is right or wrong for others, should come our own obligations. Now, my dear Cathal, you cannot get over the fact, that it is contrary to our duty to assist a false religion.”

“I think tolerance, and an acknowledgment of the freedom of others in matters of faith, are right.”

“Are we to deny our religion, to help others in theirs?”

“Deny our religion! my dear mother, why do you say such things? Who spoke of denying it?”

“Yes! because it is a principle in our religion that we cannot hold it, and encourage another faith opposed to it at the same time. To be tolerant of falsehood, you must be intolerant of truth, for one must always destroy the other; they cannot be co-existent.”

“But you will not see that I do not wish to encourage error—on the contrary, I detest Socinianism, or whatever name you give it—but why should I judge for others? I do not assume or

even wish to have any right or influence over any one in such matters."

"You cannot help having influence; the example of every man influences those about him, and we have been given this power that we may use it rightly. Nothing given to us is intended to remain in abeyance. Influence, especially, cannot; moreover in its workings it knows no neutrality. It must incline either to right or wrong; if the latter, consider your fearful responsibility. It is impossible for any man to divest himself of influence."

"I wish you could hear Schelling, my dear mother; he argues most convincingly on the side of toleration. I will not attempt to repeat what he said, because you are settled in your opinions the other way, and argument would not do any good—at least, I will leave it to him to try; however, I will shew you a kind letter I have just received from him. One characteristic of his I am sure you must admire as much as I do—he is perfectly upright and sincere."

"Excellent qualities, for which, I confess, I did not give him credit."

"Come, mother, you never do Schelling justice. I like him better than almost any one I ever met, and you have no notion how clever he is. Next

time he comes, he must let you know him better ; when he was here you only talked to that boy, Rupert."

" I liked 'that boy, Rupert,' much better, there was more truth in him than in his father."

" You still suspect Schelling's sincerity, I see, but I cannot conceive how you found out Rupert was truer than his father."

" I do not mean that either of them ever said what was not true, but I think that the son, in all his studies and thoughts, sought more for the truth, which exists in all things ; he looked behind the result for the originating cause ; his father rather studied the practical uses of the results."

" And is it not better to be of use to men, than to spend one's days in idle dreams about the nature of things ?"

" There is a cant now-a-days about benefitting mankind, which I do not at all admire ; we are apt to forget that each man is born to look after himself, and not after other people."

" And would you have selfishness govern the world ?"

" Not selfishness, but self-love, which is often opposed to selfishness. Selfishness is, I think, to our animal nature, what self-love is to that

part of us which is immortal ; the one considers the interest of the soul, the other grasps at a momentary gratification of the body."

"But it is the interest of the soul to be virtuous ; it is virtuous to assist others, therefore, self-love leads us to philanthropy."

"And so it does, as long as philanthropy is a virtue, but when the desire to be of use to others jars with any duty of our own, it ceases to be so."

"I do not understand you, mother. You say one is to help others in one breath, and in the next that it is wrong. How can benevolence be wrong?"

"I mean that it is right to do good to others when it does good to ourselves, and wrong when it injures ourselves."

"But, do you know, notwithstanding what you have said, that sounds very selfish?"

"No ! because by ourselves, I mean our whole selves, our future as well as our present interests."

"And so you think we may overlook our own duties to ourselves from excessive philanthropy?"

"Exactly."

"Then you place our duty to ourselves, above our duty to others."

"Yes ; every gift, every faculty we possess, is

given to us to help ourselves, and each man's occupation is solely to advance his real interests. Our duty to others is contained in our duty to ourselves, but it is secondary, though the two always harmonize."

"Well! I think we differ more in words than in sense," replied Cathal; "however, I came in to shew you Schelling's letter. Here it is. I must go back to Major Wyndham now. His letters will be late for the post, unless I tell him to make haste."

When she had finished reading the letter, Mrs. More gave it to me. It touched on many interesting subjects, well handled; towards the end, there was this passage—

"If, by this time, you have well considered the arguments in favour of my proposal, which I laid before you in our last conversation, I am sure you have, ere now, found them convincing. Toleration is the marked virtue of our age, and believe me, we shall, before long, see the fusion of sects into one universal amity, which is predicted by all far-seeing men.

"The process is going on, even now, and will you not be a labourer in the great work—a promoter of the universal charity, so consonant to both natural and divine law?

“Agree to my request—I am sure you will,—which you must allow is not unreasonable, that you will sell me, or let on lease for ever, enough of land from your park for the erection of a chapel. I would not ask this of you, but that there is such bigotry among the English and Roman Catholic clergy in your vicinity, that they will not allow their superstitious flocks to dispose of land for the purpose, which I stupidly told them.

“You shall have the sum of money you require at once—on this condition—I think you said £20,000, as a mortgage over your whole property. Four per cent will quite satisfy me, as I am really anxious to serve you, and by this measure you will much reduce your present yearly payments, leaving over a good capital for your proposed improvements. If you send over your title-deeds, map of the estate, &c., and an abstract of the rental, soon, you may rely on it, I will urge my solicitor to give no delay, as you are, I know, anxious to begin draining as early as possible in the spring.”

“You see, Cathal has not yet given his consent,” said I. “I agree with you, he will be mistaken if he does, but I am sure he will see the justice of what you have said.”

“I fear not!” she answered; “Cathal is a purely Irish character, and it is a singular feature

in most of us, that we always esteem the advice and opinions of strangers, more than even the soundest counsels, if they come from our own immediate circle."

"But, in this case," I said, "the right seems very clearly on your side of the argument. How is it Cathal is at all inclined to allow this bargain? I cannot understand why Mr. Schelling should have fixed on this locality, or why your son should abet him."

"There is some mystery in it, that I cannot understand," replied Mrs. More. "It is strange that a comparative stranger should act in this way. I have always distrusted Mr. Schelling; but Cathal imagines him to be high-principled and upright. Besides, his personal influence, too: you see he has offered my son what he has so long tried to get—£20,000 at low interest."

"But one cannot imagine he would allow such a motive as that to influence him."

"I do not know, doctor; he might not allow it, and yet it would perhaps influence him in spite of himself. I am sure Cathal really believes that there is a great deal of truth on Mr. Schelling's side; he probably argues to himself that there is some virtue and right in what he is asked to do—and nothing positively wrong; if he con-

sents, he will be able to obtain this £20,000, which he intends to make the means of doing good among his tenants. One cannot wonder very much at his yielding."

"The safest rule," I said, "is always, I think, when two lines of action present themselves, which appear equally fair, to follow that which leads farthest from our own personal wishes, for they cast a mist over our duty which we seldom see through."

"Yes! and so self-denial forms a part of self-love, though we are accustomed to consider them opposed."

"Because," I said, "people judge by their every-day selves, their mere superficial being. But self-love is a bad rule for conduct, because it is a law, which often, through our human infirmities, we cannot decipher. I mean, few people will believe, or clearly see, that to do right is invariably for their real interests."

"No,—and it is not ordained to be the only spring of our actions."

"I think I understand you," I answered; "all good actions are agreeable to self-love, but must not proceed from it."

"Yes, for we owe a higher duty to our Creator and employer, than we do to ourselves or our

fellow-men. He, with the harmony which is found in all his provisions, has arranged that these duties are contained one within the other ; but the fact that his will is above all other considerations, yet exists, and the performance of this should be the object perpetually before us. In obedience is contained the satisfaction of self-love and charity.”

“ We are so accustomed to men’s laws not exactly fitting into one another,” I replied, “ that we find it difficult to understand this threefold harmony of neighbourly charity, self-love, and religion, a trinity in unity of duties.”

“ You mean, then, that our obedience to the will of our Creator should be the cause of our efforts to do right.”

“ Yes ! and we may perceive that it is according to the nature of things that it should be so ; for, if we act solely from motives of neighbourly charity, we soon find we have sacrificed superior duties ; if we alone work from self-love for the attainment of even heavenly rewards, we become but spiritualized egotists ; but we cannot give ourselves up too much—sacrifice too much, in the performance of the will of God, because that is the sole legitimate end which he has ordained

for our labours. In that duty alone consists the perfection to which all that is good in us tends."

"These things are hard to understand, still more hard to define," I answered, "and they seem almost unnecessary questions—for of what practical use are they? If we set the law of the ten commandments before a man, and tell him simply, that it is his duty to obey them, he will be more likely to go right than if we confuse him with first principles."

"No ! I do not think he will ; blind obedience if shaken—and in these times it is sure to be shaken—leads to scepticism, than which state nothing could be worse. Let men know and study the great principles on which good actions are founded. Set before them the whole of the Law, natural, reasonable, and divine, and they will see its beauty and its harmony ; and gain a firm standing ground, on which may be built up all the lesser virtues of daily life. It seems to me immense mischief is done by neglecting to teach men from their own nature ; they are taught from without, and not from within, generally speaking."

"You mean that what is commonly called revealed religion is made the sole rule of life."

"I do not think it is intended so to be ; we

should not in our rule of conduct disregard the laws of nature and reason ; but rather, I think, they should be shown to be the elements of supernatural law. When it is enforced and taught without this foundation being laid in men's minds, the whole superstructure of religion is insecure."

"Still, my dear madam," I remarked, "one must not undervalue faith ; for the whole Christian scheme is a mystery, requiring an exalted faith."

"Undervalue ! I would rather exalt it to the highest, for it is that part of our upward road which arrives at our Creator ; but to travel by it safely, we must first have followed the ways of reason ; making a short cut to heaven by avoiding them, reminds me of Ignorance, in the 'Pilgrim's Progress,' who arrived near the celestial city, and yet failed to enter in, because he had not travelled on the first part of the way."

"But to carry on the metaphor, reason and faith sometimes seem to lead different ways."

"They may seem, but it is because we look wrongly upon them. True reason, and true faith, must always agree. We must remember that there is no discord among any true principles ; all the voices of truth join in harmony. If there

seem disagreement it is our own faults, and we must try to bring ourselves right, and not in our presumption suppose that God's appointments contradict each other."

"It is hard to imagine this perfectness and harmony," said I, "for we are so used to imperfection and discord."

"Yes! but in these matters one must look beyond the sphere of mankind; if we do, we shall see that all that is without us, all the principles of life are 'very good,' and it should be the object of life to understand their excellence, and act in accordance with them."

"And yet," said I, musingly, "reason must ever be an insufficient judge of religion. It cannot make us understand the attributes of God; the means he uses; all the mysteries of Christianity."

"No, but in these matters reason is especially needed to instruct us of its own incapacity, to teach us the necessity of faith. Reason points out to us the duty of a religion; faith shows us the nature of that religion."

"Still, though reason may lead to right results, faith is liable to every variety of error, because we have no rule within ourselves to try it by."

"There again reason comes in; from internal evidence, and many reasonable proofs, we are

convinced of the authority of Scripture, which is our supernatural law, or rule of faith. In the objections made by one party against reason, and by the other against faith, they seem to forget that every rule and principle, natural and supernatural, are but parts of the whole system ; we cannot take an isolated principle, and say this is the true one. The truth is like light, perfect and indivisible ; we are prisms, many sided, and we break the light into different parts, and every one chooses a favourite part or colour—and each man says, ‘This is my colour, this is light, this is truth.’ It may be part of light, part of truth, but it is very different from the whole light, and from the whole truth. Join the colours together again, unite reason and religion, natural and supernatural laws, and we may obtain truth, we may see the real pure light again, and ‘walk in it.’”

I did not reply, for at the moment Major Wyndham and Cathal joined us, having finished their dispatches for the post.

CHAPTER VII.

MRS. MORE, after luncheon, proposed a walk down to the Rectory, and as the gentlemen had no particular occupation for that day, they willingly joined her. Mr. Parks, I heard, had gone back to his quarters, but Major Wyndham had remained a few more days at Cappagh. He had dismissed his sneering manner, and Mrs. More seemed to like him well enough now. It was she, I think, who had effected the change in him, and we always like our own converts. He showed himself well informed and agreeable in conversation, but a severe censor of the many follies and faults that abound in society. Contempt was his general feeling when speaking of others ; but notwithstanding this great fault, he possessed many counterbalancing good qualities. He had a refined mind, and it was an excessive though mistaken love for what is beautiful and good, which caused his scorn of those people in whom either quality did not appear. He loved refinement, but he valued more its form than its reality ;

he liked the beauty which he could see, and feel, and touch ; all he cared for at that time was the good taste which regulates our exterior conduct ; the hidden beauty, the hidden good, he did not look for.

Mrs. More possessed both exterior and interior refinement ; he was attracted by the first, and he was beginning to appreciate her whole character. It seems to me, a great hindrance to the perception of true beauty, is an encouragement of the spirit of ridicule. Satire and contempt are earth-born ; they are like evil flies which are born of decay, and feed on decay ; they have their origin and their end in the corruption of the world, and they will disappear for want of food when we attain to a perfect state. Some men spend their lives, give all their faculties to satire—they may be useful, as the dogs of Constantinople are, in clearing away garbage, and all the pursuits of men are turned to the general good by Providence—but it is well to avoid their scavenger-work. Contempt and ridicule will die with earth, unless indeed they be heightened into scorn, and become worthy of companionship with Satan.

Major Wyndham had been one of these contemptners, and in despising the superficial errors

and faults of men, he had looked only to what is superficial, either goodness, or badness, in them. In truth, we must only see the outside of things, if we laugh at our fellows. An insight into the depths of their nature will fill us with joy and sorrow incompatible with ridicule. As Wordsworth says—

“ He who feels contempt
For any living thing, hath faculties
Which he has never used.”

Mrs. More had roused these faculties in Major Wyndham; he did not now feel so inclined to laugh at his companions, as before he knew her. I perceived the beginning of this change on our walk to the rectory; for, though he sometimes told us absurd traits, of which he had been a witness in society, yet his conversation was not all ridicule.

We found Mr. Hyde busily engaged in the plot of ground before his house, which contained his flower-garden. He was showing a farmer from the mountain how to take honey from hives and yet preserve the bees; for our rector was a great bee-master, and his success had encouraged many in our neighbourhood to follow his example. We stood and watched the operation of stupifying them with fungus smoke, until they

began to revive and take to the new hive ; and we were presently found by the Miss Hydes, who had seen our party from their drawing-room window. Besides the rector's daughters, there was another young lady ; and, as visitors were not frequent at the rectory, I took the earliest opportunity of asking Catherine who she was. I had not seen her before. She was a Miss Peter, I heard ; her mother had been an acquaintance of Mr. Hyde's, many years ago, in England, and she and her daughter were both staying at the rectory for a few days.

“ Mrs. Peter,” said Catherine, “ is the daughter of a clergyman with whom papa read before his ordination ; but he had never met her since, so you may fancy how astonished he was, when she introduced herself and her daughter, the other day. She had established herself for a short time, she said, at the inn, which you know is not very comfortable, so papa felt called upon to ask her, for the sake of old times.”

Miss Peter, “ Barby,” as her mother called her, was certainly not a prize specimen of woman-kind, though decidedly pretty. She was very tall, and bent herself in a manner that quite puzzled my theories of anatomy. To this day, I am inclined to think she was a phenomenon, and

had neither ribs, nor back-bone. Her conversation was mainly composed of bows ; there was the “ Yes ” bow, and the “ No ” bow, the sweetly-appealing bow, and the gently disapproving bow. When Major Wyndham, or Cathal, approached her, she went into a flutter of bows ; and, if no one addressed her, her head hung pensively at an angle which I should, from my experience of dissected necks, have only supposed compatible with hanging. If she had been my daughter, I would certainly have bandaged her up in splints.

How often do we see contrasts between parents and children ! Mrs. Peter was as stiff as her daughter was pliable ; her head revolved, I think, on an average, about once a day on its axis. Notwithstanding her daughter’s diversity of manner, however, she seemed quite lost in admiration of all her motions, and spent hours in recapitulating the merits of “ My Barby,” to every stray bachelor.

The three young ladies joined us, as I have said, at the bee-house, Miss Peter swaying to and fro strangely as she walked. It took some minutes to get through the storm of bows which followed her introduction. She was a pretty young lady ; and no matter who, or what they are, pretty young ladies excite at first a pleasant sensation. And it was, I suppose, in

consideration of her fair long flaxen hair and sparkling swanshot—they were not large enough to be called bullet-eyes—that Cathal drew his mother aside, and said, “Ask her to dine at Cappagh.” When we went into the house, Mrs. Peter, who had chosen the stiffest backed chair in the room to sit in, was introduced to Mrs. More in due form, and the whole party were invited for that evening.

Mrs. Peter was flattered, gratified, and honoured at the distinction Mrs. More had conferred on her unworthy self. She was sure her “Barby” was charmed; and “Barby” bowed, and fluttered at every word.

“Are those samples of English or Irish growth?” asked Major Wyndham, when our visit was over.

“I have heard of Mrs. Peter,” answered Mrs. More; “she is English, but she married an Irish fortune-hunter, who died, leaving her and her daughter very poor. She had to live for a year or two on the subscriptions of her friends, but she is much better off now; however, she and her daughter seem to have caught a chronic humility since that time.”

“Take care of yourself, Wyndham,” exclaimed Cathal. “Those kind of people are the

most dangerous going, to us solitaires. When mothers have known what poverty is, they work heaven and earth to make good matches for their daughters."

"Tu quoque More, officers are always safe; but here is your visible estate for Peterkin to set."

"Just like you, young gentlemen," said Mrs. More; "how do you know but that Mrs. Peter looks with equal fear on you?"

"Now, my dear Mrs. More," answered Major Wyndham, "do you carry your charity so far as to disbelieve in maternal scheming?"

"I do not remember ever having indulged any plans myself."

"You are not a fair judge of her," he exclaimed; "what is there in common between you and Mrs. Peter?"

"A great deal, I dare say, and very likely she has the better part; you judge too much by the exterior."

"By your rule, if things signify most, which are most lasting, manner is of great consequence. Do not you think there will be the perfection of good manners in a future state?"

"Yes! I am sure there will—but formed after a very different standard to yours in London."

“Then you define refinement, in some out-of-the-way manner.”

“Perhaps you would think it very out-of-the-way. I think manner is entirely dependent on refinement of mind, and by that I understand to mean our assimilation to a state of perfection.”

“But I do not understand what refinement in this world has to do with perfection in the next.”

“You put too wide a gulf between this world and the next. Remember, our state here is joined to our future state. Did you ever watch at dawn the light on one side and the darkness on the other, how they merge into one another? so, I believe, we shall get by imperceptible degrees from our darkness at our birth, into the pure light of future excellence. Death is but the last shade of night passing away—the last brush from her heavy wings—refinement is a ray of the future light.”

“But, though I admire refinement of manner, I do not exactly see what there is so exalted in it.”

“You would not admire it if there were not—but take, now, Mrs. Peter’s manner, which has offended you so much. All that flattery proceeds from her over-estimation of worldly position and

advantages, discontent at her present station, and an unscrupulous desire to get into a higher one, which makes her fawn on every one who she thinks can assist her."

"Well, you may account for cringing snobbism in that way, but then, there is the purse-proud, overweening snob."

"His ill manners come from a most evil pride, and a want of charity and due consideration for others."

"Then, again, there are men whose rank and wealth make them gentlemen, but their want of refinement exhales in coarse sentiments—in fifty little traits—which one sees in even the best society every day."

"You will find that such traits are contrary to refinement, just because they are contrary to perfection."

"It is singular, I confess, how this perfectioning principle enters into everything—still, whatever be the origin of these people's vulgarity, it will be an amusing study to-night. They will be good foil for your beautiful god-daughters."

"Which of the Hydes do you admire the most?" asked Mrs. More.

"Let me see—Miss Hyde's is the most perfect beauty, but I like her sister's style the best. What do you say, More?"

Cathal had been talking to a woodman during the last few minutes. "When I am in a very good state of mind I like Agnes, so I suppose she is really my favourite," he replied.

"Yes ! but one has to look up to her so very much, it gives me a moral crick in the neck."

"I must say, I think women should be as excellent as may be," answered Cathal, "and in my experience I have noticed that the better a woman is, the more obedient she is to authority."

"So you think Agnes would be obedient to you?" asked Mrs. More, smiling.

"No, not to me," he answered, rather gravely ; "I am not good enough to be an authority for her."

"But is obedience always right if a wife's duty to herself clashes with her duty to her husband?" said Major Wyndham.

"Her duty to her husband is generally her duty to herself—because, her obedience to him is right, and to do right is the summary of our duty to ourselves."

"But suppose a man ordered his wife to commit murder?"

"Of course, she must not go against positive moral laws—but, in cases of doubtful right and wrong, I think the wrong, if she commits it by

command of a husband, and from no personal motive, is abrogated by the virtue of her obedience."

"What a very serious consideration marriage must be to a woman who has such principles," observed Major Wyndham.

"Yes! and what great responsibility the man undertakes," said Cathal.

"Which is it easiest, to be obedient or to govern well, do you think?" asked Major Wyndham.

"For women to be submissive, and for men to rule, because it is the law of nature," answered Mrs. More; "but, after all, it is but a mortal law. I think women will be equal to men in a future state. I understand their inferiority here to be a punishment for the first sin."

"You think of nothing but a future state," exclaimed Major Wyndham. "It is very necessary sometimes to consider the present—is it not?"

"Yes! but always with reference to the future—it is a moral childishness not to do so—for women especially, and their lives here are an almost constant reminder of it."

"Perhaps that is the reason," said Cathal, "why we see women more religious, more believing, generally than men. They are in a

manner driven to aspirations for the future, and contemplations of coming happiness, by their weakness and state of subjection to men, to whom they are often morally superior, in their present existence."

"Yes!" answered Mrs. More, "if women have, as a class, more faith, it is probably because they have been forced out of merely natural religion, by their internal sense that they are in an unnatural condition; for it is moral goodness which constitutes the true superiority of men over their fellows. Women possess equal, sometimes superior moral goodness to men, and yet they are always inferior in condition to them. There is an injustice in this, which is only explained by revelation. No wonder women should so fervently cling to it, and possess such a strong faith in their Magna Charta—the Bible."

"That mingled equality and superiority which exist in the relations of men and women, appear to me a strong presumption of some future righting of things," said Cathal; "it shows that our being has reference to some final condition beyond this earth."

"Who would have thought that Mrs. and Miss Peter would have led us from earth to heaven," said Major Wyndham. "However, to

come back again to firm footing—have the Miss Hydes any mother?”

“No; their mother died when they were yet young. She was a great friend of mine, very like what Agnes is now.”

“But I want to know,” said Major Wyndham, “how, living in this country, they contrive to be so charming. Really, they have as good manners as any people.”

“Partly, because they are very refined, according to my principle of refinement,” answered Mrs. More, “and they have an English aunt, who contributes what is needed of manner. They pay her a visit once a year, in Staffordshire.”

“Ah!” exclaimed Major Wyndham, “I thought they must have been in England—but who is their aunt?”

“Lady Hunsdon, of Hunsdon Grange,” answered Mrs. More. “But you must ask Cathal about her, for he has seen her, and I have not.”

“I have been at her parties in London,” said Major Wyndham. “She is rather fast—is she not, More?”

“Rather too much so, to please me,” he replied. “My first introduction to her was in the Highlands. I thought, for some time, I must have misunderstood the name I had heard,

for she wore a Glengarry bonnet, and carried a rifle; and, during our day's shooting, she distinguished herself by doing the wildest, and most dangerous feats."

"Your neighbours do not seem to have learned much from her example—they are not in that line, I am sure."

"They have my mother before them for eleven months and their aunt for only one, so they are not likely to be contaminated," answered Cathal.

"Besides," added Mrs. More, "the whole stream of good Irish society sets against unfeminineness. Whatever may be their faults, one never, scarcely, hears of an Irish lady doing masculine acts. I assure you, some English women who have come to this country, have quite astonished us Irish."

"Did you hear," asked Cathal, "of Lady Louisa Chetwode? She headed a large party of her guests in a scramble across hedges and ditches, dressed in a Jim Crow hat, a shooting-coat covered with pockets, a short petticoat, and men's shoes, and worsted stockings completing the costume. The peasants were shocked."

"Perhaps it was a sensible dress," said Mrs.

More, apologetically; "she might have been going to walk through a very rough country."

"Sensible! my dear mother, it is more incumbent on a woman to be feminine; if such a dress was necessary for her walk, she should not have taken such a walk."

"I agree with you," said Major Wyndham, "it's quite a duty to be feminine, but it is one unthought of now, by some ladies."

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"Miss Savage is infected with the unfeminine mania," said Cathal; "she said the other day to me, 'Young ladies do not go down now, unless they can talk a little slang.'"

"Bah!" said Major Wyndham, "what next? But who is this Lady Louisa Chetwode?"

"O'Neil told me," he answered, "that she was a Miss Waldegrave, rather a nice girl, before she got into Chetwode's set."

"Waldegrave!" repeated Major Wyndham, with a slight start; "Is she come here?"

"Do you know her?" said Mrs. More.

"Yes! very intimately," he answered; "I had no idea she was married."

The truth was, as I afterwards heard, that Major Wyndham had admired her a good deal when she first came out, but his good taste had been somewhat shocked by the very marked advances her mother made to him, not altogether unseconded, he fancied, by the young lady. He went abroad in disgust, and not hearing of her marriage, he had not recognised her identity with the Lady Louisa Chetwode, of whom such strange stories were circulated ; besides, she had acquired her ennoblement by courtesy, since he knew her, on the succession of her brother to his cousin's peerage.

"That's what I like in Agnes Hyde," said Cathal, after a moment's silence, "she is so above all that."

"I am afraid she is above me, too," said Major Wyndham. "Though a perfect woman might obey the best, I, an erring man, would never feel I had a right to command her."

"I do not think it is men's goodness or badness which gives them authority over their wives—it belongs to the nature of things," remarked Mrs. More ; "and, when they act disobediently to this order, how absurd and painful the results are !"

"You are one of those, I see, who think that

doing wrong is repugnant to our nature?" asked Major Wyndham.

"Yes, always; we always involuntarily try to gloss over our wrong before we commit it, from that very reason," said Mrs. More.

"What would popular preachers say to such an idea?"

"Popular preachers, in their anxiety to make God's mercy seem infinite, have blackened men's nature. Now, men's nature is, after all, a work of God's, still presenting divine outlines. It is like a well in autumn, choked by rotten leaves, and the scum of decay, but yet the clear water bubbles up through it here and there, and presently the rubbish will be gone, and the spring will remain clear as crystal."

"It is a pious fraud to debase man unduly, that they may elevate his Creator," said Cathal.

"Who that regards the great Beginning and End, will think that He needs human contrivances to exalt Him?" said Mrs. More.

"Then you acknowledge that error creeps in, even into the Anglican worship?" asked Cathal.

"When men add to it their own error; and these pious frauds have spread much among the more enthusiastic members of our church; they are very dangerous, for they attack our unguarded

side, and they lead, with perhaps innocent intentions, to grievous results. If we once leave the side of truth, we go, quick as thought can go, astray."

"I am really beginning to think like you," said Major Wyndham; "one must keep perpetually looking beyond men, beyond the world, if one would at all judge of the rules of actions."

"Yes, we can learn no more of them, by the experience this world affords us, than we could learn of the theory of steam engines, by watching the paddles of a steam-packet. We must leave the passengers on deck, and go down into the engine-room of truth, if we would rightly understand them."

"Apropos of steamers," exclaimed Cathal. "I see by the papers, Schelling's new improvement in printing by steam, is generally approved of. He is certainly a very clever fellow; the most extraordinary mixture I ever saw, filled with German extravagancies, and yet a rationalist."

"I should say," answered Mrs. More, "credulousness was his character, and he follows it in believing readily all the wonders man may perform; but rationalism in his religion, and that governs all his theories concerning the wonders God may do."

“He must be sincere,” said Cathal, “he is so devoted to his creed.”

“I do not see how that follows,” said Mrs. More ; “but do you know why he is so ? Unitarians are generally an unproselytising sect.”

“I fancy he is, and was, particularly in his youth, a good deal stung by the antipathy and disgust which some relations of his expressed for his creed. Since then, he has devoted himself to the propagation of what he believes to be the truth.”

“The cause in which he struggles is little worthy of so much energy,” said Mrs. More, gravely ; “but now, as we are at the hall door, I must go in, and tell the servants there will be guests to dinner.”

She left us ; the gentlemen went their way, and I to visit a patient, which occupied me until dinner-time.

CHAPTER VIII.

Mrs. and Miss Peter, Mr. Hyde and his daughters, punctually arrived at precisely half-past seven. Some minutes before they actually came into the room, while they were walking up the long corridor, which led from the hall-door to where we sat before dinner, we heard a rustling and rattling, as if there were a high wind.

“A stormy night,” remarked I, innocently, thinking that a gust had entered by the hall-door ; but I discovered my mistake, when Miss Peter writhed up to Cathal. She was like a cloud in chains, if my readers can comprehend what I mean ; a cirrus of blue and white gauze, hung with every variety of noisy bracelet. She wore the first of those extraordinary bunches of charms, which many ladies now carry, that had come to Cappagh. I counted five hearts appended to different chains about her ; and, when I asked rather bluntly, in the course of the evening, if there were any meaning attached to them, she told me simperingly—pointing to a little crack

across each—that they were the emblems of her dominions.

Mrs. Peter walked as stiffly as a ram-rod, and as if she had no legs; she looked as if she was made of the celebrated yellow starch. A specimen of the severe school of art; plenty of severity, plenty of art.

“You are very punctual,” said Mrs. More to her, as the first dinner-bell rang.

“Madam, such is my invariable rule; and on such a festive occasion as this, you may be sure I would not forego it.”

“It is a good plan,” said Catherine Hyde, “to put on the clock a few minutes, and then one is sure to be in time.”

“A moral falsehood! a dereliction from duty!” exclaimed Mrs. Peter.

“Which I was guilty of to-day,” quietly remarked Catherine, “for papa is always late.”

“What a sumptuously splendid apartment!” resumed Mrs. Peter, finding that her high school of morality was not applauded; “but its inhabitants are indeed worthy of such a palace.”

As Cappagh house was plain and old-fashioned, even good-natured Mrs. More looked a little disgusted.

The announcement of dinner, however, saved

her from replying ; and, after many speeches from Miss Peter, and protestations of undeserved honour, by her mother, they were taken into the dining-room by the two young men. The conversation did not flag, for Miss Peter emulated her bracelets in keeping up a perpetual rattle. She sat next to Major Wyndham and poured the rival noises into his ears ; he unmovedly eat his dinner, and occasionally made a remark to Catherine Hyde, who sat on the other side, at which she seemed much amused. Surprised at his indifference, Miss Peter turned to me, and asked, in a whisper, if her neighbour was deaf.

“ No ! but the conversation was well supported by Miss Peter,” answered Major Wyndham, who had overheard the whisper.

“ My Barby,” interposed her mother, whose eyes were never off her daughter, “ you fatigue Major Wyndham, with your little innocent pleasantries.”

“ I assure you,” said Major Wyndham, “ I am excessively fond of music, and Miss Peter’s voice and bracelets join in complete harmony.”

Her mother could not make him out, so she let the subject drop ; and in a few minutes the ladies were gone.

When we joined them again, Mrs. Peter was

discussing, with upturned eyes, some very sad subject—at least, she looked solemnity itself.

“ My dear Madam,” I heard her say, as we came in, “ they are all like the Church of the Lacedemonians, neither hot nor cold, the worst of all states.”

“ The Spartans, I believe, were celebrated for enduring cold,” said Major Wyndham.

Mrs. Peter looked round, savagely ; but seeing who had spoken, the wrinkles on her face were in a moment dispersed.

“ How can you pretend to know anything about it ?” cried Miss Peter, with naiveté, as she came with a dancing step from the piano, to where we were standing.

“ Pray continue your music ; do not let me disturb you,” said Major Wyndham.

“ How rude he is !” said the young lady in an audible whisper, addressing her mother.

“ Will you not give us some music ?” asked Cathal, civilly, coming to the rescue at an imploring look from Agnes.

“ Oh ! I really do not sing, do I, dear ?” said Miss Peter, turning to Catherine.

“ I am a bad judge,” she answered, “ but pray try ‘ *Les yeux noirs d’une blonde*,’ which you sang last night.”

“Oh, *my* song. Now, Mrs. More, this was written for me ;” and she sat down and sang one of those trilling French *chansonnettes*—turning her eyes about to suit the description of their various powers, which the verses of the song contained. Major Wyndham took up the bracelet which had been left on the piano, and opened a miniature knapsack which was one of the appendant charms ; it contained another small gold heart.

“Do not look at my little possession,” exclaimed its owner, “it is a sweet souvenir of the gallant and the brave,” she murmured with a sigh.

Miss Hyde had a cough, and could not sing, so we commenced some small plays.

“Do let us try consequences,” exclaimed Miss Peter, who foresaw great opportunities for flirting, in the coupling of gentlemen’s and ladies’ names, which is part of the game. We all agreed.

“I really do not like to write your name, it’s so very ugly,” said Major Wyndham, coolly. “I think I will put down Wyndham, instead of Peter.”

“Oh, that would be wrong, but it would be very nice,” she replied, not unconsciously.

“Do you not think it is nearly time to go,

Papa?" said Agnes Hyde, almost impatiently, to her father.

"Oh no! do not dream of going yet," exclaimed Cathal.

"I am afraid you are dreaming," said Major Wyndham to Catherine, who looked dispirited, a very different mood from her general one.

"It makes me uncomfortable," she replied in a low voice, "to see one's fellow-creatures so painfully absurd."

"Do you not always, then, like laughing at people?" asked Major Wyndham, in the same subdued voice.

"I am not sure that I ever really liked it, but it is sometimes irresistible," she answered.

"I thought you were never in earnest."

She replied by Longfellow's line, "Life is real, life is earnest."

"It is," said Major Wyndham, thoughtfully, and then half to himself, "these are strange people; but," he continued addressing Catherine, "I thought you, at least, were a link with the world. Do you, too, partake of Mrs. More's idealism?"

"Everything about her is real, and not ideal," said Catherine, earnestly, "and Agnes is like

her ; as for me, I am a long way behind them—but I hope to follow in their steps.”

“ Really, dear, you are quite engrossing the Major,” interrupted Miss Peter’s harsh thin voice. “ We are going now.”

When their carriage wheels had ceased to sound, we began the discussion which invariably is held over departed guests. Major Wyndham, however, seemed silent and dreamy, and the evening was quickly brought to a close.

A few days after, as I was returning from attending a branch dispensary, I called for a moment at the rectory. Major Wyndham was sitting by Catherine’s side, cutting pencils for her as she drew. Miss Peter, to my surprise, as I knew Mrs. Hyde did not expect her mother to stay, was in the drawing-room busily crocheting a purse. Mrs. Peter, as usual, sat bolt upright in an uncomfortable cane-chair, holding in her hand a book of sermons, but instead of reading, she watched intently with her leaden eyes, every movement of the young people.

“ Where is Cathal ?” I asked, rather wondering how his friend came to be there without him.

“ I left him going to write some tremendously long letter to his friend Mr. Schelling ; his mother and he were holding a council over it,

so I came away." None of them seemed to want my society much, and I went in search of my friend, Hyde; he was in his study, looking over a modern book of the Lockite school.

"Come out and have a walk," said I. "You do not take exercise enough; and reading books like that, overstrain the brain."

"Cause confusion in it, if you like," replied he, smiling; "for its theories lead to a disagreement between experience and religion, and the reader does not know which to adopt as his guide in life."

"How so?" I asked.

"Why, the writer rests our knowledge of every fact upon sensation. By this, he at once places a barrier against revelation, which never can rest upon experience, because by the nature of it, it is a miracle."

"Those trimmers between rationalism and Christianity, I believe, intend our faith to be entirely independent of reason."

"Exactly, but a faith like that is always ready to fail; and so the disciples of Locke, who were not such firm believers as himself, have mostly degenerated into mere Deists."

"But still, it is a plausible theory enough," said I, "that all our knowledge is acquired from

without, because certainly it is evident that most of it is, and you cannot easily prove a single idea to be born with us."

"I think we can; but even granting we cannot, the weight of proof lies with the Lockists, for the analogy of nature is with us."

"Why? Can you prove animals to have original ideas?"

"What is instinct but an innate idea? why will a bird, without ever seeing other birds do the same—sit and hatch its young? why does salmon-fry, the moment it is vivified, begin its journey to the sea? Those instincts are born with them, and I believe man has instincts, or innate ideas, as they are called, as well as inferior animals. Some truths we feel to be antecedent to experience, and to govern our reception of it, though finally it will confirm them."

"But you do not mean to say that all ideas are born with us?"

"No! but I think we have innate ideas of abstractions, of abstract virtue, for instance, which idea we are accustomed to call the rule of conscience; of abstract justice, which we know as the spirit of fair play, and so on. All that we perceive about man, his inventions and discoveries,

and about this visible earth, I grant you we learn by experience."

"But your adversaries say, they come at those abstract ideas through a course of experience."

"I think the dissimilitude in the way we possess the knowledge of experienced facts, proves the different ways through which we have come by these two sets of ideas. We are born with abstract notions fresh from God; and they show their source, by being universal, true, perfect, and exact. Those results, the knowledge of which we have arrived at by the imperfect sources of men's observation and reason, are differing and uncertain."

"No," said I, "there is the sun's appearance, for instance; all nations have had experience of that, and all nations are agreed about it."

"Are they?" answered the Rector. "Now there is one of the best experienced facts, yet look at the diversity of opinions on that very point. Some nations think the sun to be a God; some a shield of gold, as big as a round table; there is nothing certain known of what it is, even by the most learned. Now take the abstract idea of truth; we know what it is, in what it consists, all about it, in all ages, in all nations. We could

not come by this certainty from experience, unless we were omniscient and omnipresent."

"Certainly," said I. "I have often wondered that the school of experiencers did not see that. Their theory would only suit an infinite being, if we could imagine such a one, launched completely ignorant into creation."

"Yes! and how can they, whose experience must be different with every man, and gathered from differing facts, ever arrive at positive principles? Now such are necessary to man's morality. So God has mercifully implanted some great truths, to be guiding stars for our conduct."

"Then I suppose you think the religious principle which is found throughout the world, to be innate."

"Yes! because I cannot see that by experience we are led to religion."

"But by it, one may discover that there is a moral governor, though I confess with difficulty; and besides, it leads to the belief that there exists a Creator—a first cause."

"Allowing that it does, it does not teach us to worship that first cause; nor does it instruct us what are the morals that Creator enforces. Because our finiteness leads us into unavoid-

able error, we are, I think, given an instinct of what is perfect, and whenever we follow it, it will lead us to right. Whatever we are taught in this manner, is true and exact ; whatever we learn from our own experience, is fallible, though sometimes almost true and almost exact."

"If that be so then," I said, "we should judge all acquired truth by the principles we have derived from a higher source."

"Just so ; and I think most of the error which has arisen in the world, has been caused by reversing the process, and judging of abstract truth by experience. I think experience is not capable of doing so ; it is like a man judging God. We should rather take the original great rules of our innate ideas, or abstract truths, and square the results of our discoveries to fit into them."

"You agree on these points well with Mrs. More," said I.

"We have often talked the matter over together ; it is extraordinary, for a woman, what correct notions she has."

"Have you heard of Mr. Schelling's proposition to Cathal More?"

"Yes," he answered, "Mrs. More asked me, as an old friend, to advise him against accepting it."

And have you done so?"

“I was there this very morning, and said what I could ; but he cut me short, by telling me, that I was of course, as a minister of the English church, a prejudiced person.”

“His mother is very unhappy about it,” said I.

“Yes ! but she will not ask Cathal for her sake to refuse Mr. Schelling, nor will she even let him perceive that it is pressing on her mind.”

“I am sure he would not refuse her, for he is very affectionate, and attached to her ; but why will she not ask him ?”

“Because she wishes him to act from his own feeling of right, and not from an impulse of kindness.”

“But suppose he does introduce Unitarianism ; surely, it would be wiser of her to prevent that, by any means.”

“Why, she has very fixed notions of each man being responsible for his own actions ; she hopes her son may discover his error by his own researches into his conduct, which he would probably never make, if he let the matter drop now, to please her. — Love for strict right,” he continued, “and her affection for her son, make her wish him to act from principle ; she would not have him led merely by his impulses,

into doing even an action that would have good results."

"You did not expect your present guests to stay so long, did you?" I asked.

"I did not expect them to stay at all," he answered; "but, of course, a certain amount of hospitality is required from me, as rector."

"I suppose," said I, "Mrs. Peter is attracted by Cathal and his rich friend."

"Yes; I had the ill luck, the evening she arrived, to tell her More's rental, and what I had heard from him about Major Wyndham. I saw her interchange a look with her daughter, and since then they have not said a word about going."

"They must be a great plague in your house; do not you know any thing more about them, than your old boyish acquaintance?"

"When Mr. Peter died insolvent, I helped a subscription for his wife, and I have heard occasionally of them since; they live in Dublin now, for some one gave them a house there."

"What do your daughters say to them?"

"Agnes is kind to them, because she thinks it right; and Catty is rather amused by their odd ways. I think Major Wyndham is a little caught by the girl, for he is here almost every morning."

“ He was in the drawing-room when I was there ; but do not suppose he is admiring ‘ My Barby ;’ it is evident that she drags him about, and keeps him in conversation, almost against his will.”

“ Mrs Peter told me yesterday, that there was every probability of their being married,” he said with an amusingly perplexed air.

“ Hush,” I cried, “ there is the lady in question walking with a book in her hand ; let us turn down this path.” We were not destined to be alone, however, for in a moment we came across Major Wyndham and Miss Peter, in a parallel walk to the one her mother had taken.

Mr. Hyde turned to me triumphantly. “ Did not I tell you so ? Major Wyndham is certainly paying his addresses to the young lady.”

“ Her mother and she are paying theirs to him, you mean,” I exclaimed.

“ Well, whichever it is, I will go in now, while the house is quiet ; for I have had no peace lately, Miss Peter sings and plays so violently.”

We went into the drawing-room, and found the rector’s daughters still drawing.

“ Why did you not go out with Miss Peter, girls ?” asked their father.

“ She wished, and wished to go out, and com-

plained of having no one to walk with, until she fairly tormented Major Wyndham into going with her," said Catherine.

"And why did not you go?"

"I offered to do so, but Mrs. Peter looked so annoyed that I withdrew my proposal."

"But what was very strange," said Agnes, "Mrs. Peter, who had been complaining of rheumatism all the morning, went and put on her bonnet and shawl, the moment her daughter was gone."

"Yes! we met her walking," I said. "How do you like her?"

"Not at all," said Catherine; "everything is stiff about her, except her notions of right and wrong."

"My dear Catty," said Agnes, reprovingly.

"Now you know, Agnes, it is no harm telling Doctor ——, is it? So I will. She is always saying how she 'gets on,' as she calls it, and what tricks she plays to succeed in her schemes; and then, when Agnes looks grave, she repeats for the occasion a form of cant she knows by heart, about the 'one thing needful.'"

"And what is her one thing needful?" I asked.

"I am sure, in truth, it is money."

“What would papa say, if he heard you?” said Agnes, trying to look grave, but smiling in spite of herself. Mr. Hyde had gone into his study.

“And her daughter is still more extraordinary,” continued Catherine, when she saw the smile on her sister’s face. “She told us she was writing a novel—we asked what it was about—and she said, it was to exemplify her experiences of love and valour, and that she was engaged just now on a moonlight scene.”

“Military men, by moonlight, I suppose,” said I.

“Moonshine, perhaps,” she answered, laughing; “but besides, she showed me a collection of letters she had written to an imaginary suitor, and his supposed answers.”

“Could you persuade her to let us see them?” asked I.

“Very likely,” she answered; “for I assure you she is excessively proud of them; she calls them ‘Broken words of burning hearts.’”

“Here they come,” said Agnes; “do stop, Catherine.”

Major Wyndham entered alone. Catherine looked inquiringly at him.

“I have had a narrow escape, and been in imminent peril,” he said.

“ You are not hurt, I hope,” said Agnes, who did not observe his air of badinage.

“ Can I do anything for you ? anything broken ? Any vessel of the heart ? ” I inquired, meaningly.

“ No. I saved myself by presence of mind, and great skill ; but I really cannot tell the particulars, it would too much alarm the young ladies.”

“ Is it anything about Miss Peter ? ” asked Miss Hyde.

“ Yes.”

“ Oh, then do not tell it to us ; she is our guest, you know.”

“ What nonsense, Agnes ! as if we cared for her ; shut up your ears, for I want to hear it,” said Catherine.

“ Pray do not,” answered Agnes, gravely ; “ papa would not like it.”

“ You are right, Agnes, as you always are ; you must not tell your adventure, Major Wyndham,” said her sister.

“ I must tell it to some one,” he said ; “ so come, doctor, I will walk with you, whichever way you are going.”

I was rather astonished at the invitation, for the first day I was introduced to Major Wyndham he was as supercilious as an Englishman well could be. However, he had changed much since

then, and seemed to have found out that the inhabitants of Cappagh were not utter savages. I assented to his proposal ; and, when we were out of hearing, he burst into the heartiest fit of laughing I ever heard him indulge in, for he rarely ever went beyond a quiet smile.

“Those women !” he exclaimed ; “if I had not met Mrs. More and the Hydes, I should certainly have imagined that it was the Irish custom.”

“What is the Irish custom ?” I asked.

“I must tell you ; I must tell every one ; I really cannot keep so good a story secret.”

“Do not spare Miss Peter,” I said ; “she is one of those women who deserve to be well laughed at.”

“You must know she has attacked me ever since that evening they dined with the Mores. I saw it at once, but I felt a kind of curiosity to see what such wild animals would do ; and I often came down to the rectory in the morning. To-day, Miss Peter asked me to go out walking with her ; she was very sentimental, in the broad farce style, until at last she got rather too earnest, and talked of our future fate, and all that kind of thing—so I informed her that I had just got leave, and that I was going to England next week. No answer was made ; then I said I should like to get back to Wyndham manor ; no answer still,

but a half-groan instead. 'I beg your pardon,' said I, 'did you speak?' She muttered something which I did not catch; as I stooped down to try and hear, Mrs. Peter rushed from behind a hedge, and seizing both our hands, exclaimed, 'I see how it is; I congratulate you.' 'On having got leave of absence,' I answered; 'yes, I am very lucky, and just now too, when there is nothing to do here.' You should have seen their anger—it was charming; they could neither of them trust themselves to speak. Miss Peter pulled her arm out of mine, where it had been lying; and she and her mother walked off at a tremendous pace to the rectory. I could scarcely manage to keep from a good fit of laughter, until they were out of hearing."

"But perhaps she is really disappointed," I said.

"I am quite sure she is; and to comfort her, I said, just as we came in, 'I will introduce a subaltern of mine to you, Miss Peter; he is very rich, and not very wise.'"

"And will you do so?"

"I think I will; it will serve him right, for being such a silly fellow."

"She shows badly by the side of Mrs. More, certainly."

“As to that, if she was by the side of American squaws, she would be intolerable.

“What a contrast she is to the Miss Hydes,” he continued; “they are really refined; there is the refinement of good about them as well as fashion. Mrs. More was right; she herself is the least vulgar woman I ever met—she astonishes me; and in Ireland, too.”

“I think you are mistaken about Irish people,” I answered.

“You cannot imagine what odd society I have seen, since I came over; at one house, I found a party made up almost entirely of Englishmen, to meet me, they said. I was talking to one of the grooms one morning, and I asked some of their names. ‘There is Mr. Jones, and there is Mr. Perkins, and Mr. Penny,’ he said, with a grin; ‘you know, sir, we likes to be rubbin up against the English.’ I found too, the master and mistress of the house had given up their room for my accommodation, and gone to an attic. Now what can one think of such slavish people?”

“Very badly, I allow; but there are many causes for this slavishness, and the English have not been altogether guiltless of producing it. There are yet, nevertheless, specimens of a better class.”

“They must be very rare, for I have scarcely

met any people since I came to Ireland, who have not been tinged with this cringing to everything English."

"It is the result of an ill-assorted union," I could not help replying.

"The two nations are certainly hopelessly different now," said Major Wyndham.

"Hopefully different!" I exclaimed; "we are a separate people, of separate natures from the English; we may be loyal subjects, faithful allies, but we cannot merge into their existence. From the attempt to force us to do so, has arisen many of the anomalies of Ireland. We are under the worst of all tyranny—the tyranny of a stranger nation. It would be better for Ireland if there were a Napoleon on the English throne."

"Well, we must not get on politics," said Major Wyndham. "English and Irishmen never agree about them, and here is More looking very grave."

Cathal joined his friend; and, while they went on with their walk, I left them to have half an hour's conversation with Mrs. More.

CHAPTER IX.

I MUST apologize to the reader, if I have written down too many of the conversations, which were induced by the events I have described. They remained fixed on my mind—so that I have been able to recall them, nearly word for word as they were spoken ; and I know no better way of setting forth the character of Mrs. More, than by leaving her to speak for herself : those who tire of what she says, and love an exciting and quickly-changing story, must needs be wearied by these pages. I only write the simple events as they occurred ; but I am particular to note down my old friend's sentiments, as I think they are worthy of being known, and I am sure they will please those who, like her, go on to perfection. I pray the reader to forgive me, if they be somewhat tedious. I found her when I went in, as usual, occupied in some employment which had the good of the poor for its object ; she was making up the accounts of her penny-club, and preparing the papers belonging to it for the new year.

“Cathal has decided on accepting Mr. Schelling’s proposal,” she said, as I closed the door behind me.

“So I guessed, from what Major Wyndham told me,” I answered.

“I can only trust, that my son has acted strictly as he thought right ; but I do not agree in his views.”

“I am sorry—” I began.

“No, doctor, now that it is settled, let us say no more about it. I may be wrong, and, perhaps, over strict in my views ; at all events, Cathal must be the judge of his own affairs.”

“He looked very grave,” said I, “as I met him.”

“Yes ; I do not think he is quite decided that he is right, and indecision of conduct is always painful.”

She, indeed, looked very sorrowful ; the furrows were more deeply marked on her countenance ; her figure was more stooped, her fingers more tremulous than usual. Sorrow had beckoned to old age, and he had cast upon her a withering breath. She looked years older than when she sat by the blazing fire, on the night of Mr. Schelling’s arrival, but yet she would not complain. She spoke cheerfully ; she did everything in its

order—but a keen blight had passed over her. She tried to believe that Cathal was acting conscientiously ; but yet she thought, was not conscience the same in all men, and what hers so loudly protested against, could his sanction ? Besides, she had noticed his gloom, his avoidance of the subject, his ceasing to have those half-hours of quiet intercourse with her, in which he had formerly delighted. She saw that he was not content ; and she could foresee still greater gloom, still greater self-reproach, when the consequences of his present deviation from the strict line of duty were tested. She knew his upright nature, and that the strong twisted ropes of evil reasoning, the cords of vanity, would, when too late, recoil, and that he would suffer intensely when he saw the evil he had allowed ; and, besides her alarmed affection for Cathal, she sorrowed for those who might be led astray by his means. She sorrowed through foresight of the ravages that would be committed among his neighbours, by the evil spirit of heresy and unbelief. Surely, there was good reason why the lines on her countenance should be more deeply furrowed, why her form should be bent with care, and her fingers trembling from anxiety. Cathal could not have marked this sorrow and this grief ; he could not,

if he had, have persisted in his course. Some signs of it he must have perceived ; but now he felt a desire to assert his independence; he would “judge for himself ; the world’s opinion was on his side.”

What contradictions we run into when we give into a temptation ! he would “judge for himself,” yet he was swayed by the world ! As for independence, what is it ? a mere chimera—luring men to evil, “*l’indipendenza é un tesoro inalienabile di Dio Solo*,”—for man to assume it, is a treason against God. And it was treason to God, and treason to the Christian religion, and treason to his own conscience, to admit this Unitarian heresy. And why did he admit it ? What object could be sufficiently great to encourage him to such an act ? A mistaken desire to do good—he was cramped by want of capital,—he thought that if he had this capital, he could improve the condition of his tenants—he did not see the evils he was bringing about ; or rather, he was wilfully blind to them, for he thought he was acting for the advantage of others, and he purposely overlooked his own personal duty, from false philanthropy.

Personal duty should be our engrossing care ; true self-love, the spring of all our actions. And no one may be kind to others, if it in one jot

injures his real interests ; these are true principles, though they sound somewhat strange ; but men who deviate from them, not only act wrongly, but seldom bring about any certain good to others. We hear great talk of philanthropy, of neighbourly charity and toleration ; yet, if benevolence infringes on the slightest injunction of conscience, it becomes sin. We forget this, and commit pious frauds, tell “white lies,” do all manner of evil, and gloss it over by imagining it is done with a good intention of benefitting others.

This perversion of truth is too common in Ireland ; the lower class carry it so far, that perjury seems to them a light offence, if it assists their friends ; they become accessories to murder sooner than injure a neighbour, and even the upper classes will strain a point—in plain English, act against their sense of right—to help their party. Cathal More “strained a point :” he wrote to Mr. Schelling, promising him a site for his chapel, and his countenance in building it, if he would transmit the £20,000 before the spring. A favourable answer came in return ; Mr. Schelling expressed himself well pleased that Cathal had not been blinded by narrow bigotry, and promised, that without delay the money should

be placed to his friend's credit, on his sending over his title-deeds, and the usual papers.

So far the matter was concluded. Mr. Schelling was, as Mrs. More had said, a singular contradiction of his creed. Unitarians are usually, from their rationalism, a calm and unproselytising sect ; their religion has for its votaries a class of unenthusiastic, cold, but subtle thinkers, who disdain to spread their opinions by the influence of men's mortal affections. They make our finite reason the originator and judge of religion, and so they leave their doctrines to be determined by its narrow deductions.

It is a system which men have invented, simple, and agreeable to reason, perhaps, but not appealing to nature, and not calculated to find favour with the multitude. Such is modern Unitarianism ; but Mr. Schelling seemed to have in him the spirit of the Arian persecutors in the third century. An inveterate hostility to Christianity, an eager propagandism of his infidel creed, were his leading characteristics ; they were the objects of his life, and the greater part of it had been spent in pursuing them. Unscrupulous in the means he used, he affected the most humane and generous character ; and seeing in Cathal a philanthropist, with unfixed principles on the

subject of religious requirements, he advocated before him the most unbounded toleration, and by his talent and sophistries, completely deranged his already wavering ideas ; in reality, inducing him to attack the Christian religion by thus countenancing her adversary, while the young man imagined he was only encouraging freedom of opinion. It was not religion, nor even fanaticism, which caused his bitterness against the Anglican church.

In his youth he had been domesticated in the family of an English clergyman for some months ; he was only eighteen at the time, yet he soon felt a most violent attachment for his host's niece, who was staying at the same house. Mr. Schelling was then comparatively poor and unknown. The young lady was strikingly beautiful, and very much admired by men of rank and fortune in the county ; and, when he avowed his love to her, with all the confidence of inexperience, and presumption of conscious clearness ; she harshly refused him, and spoke with cutting contempt of his infidel creed and foreign origin.

Bitterly and sternly he resolved, as she turned from him, that his best energies should be, for life, devoted to damaging her religion, and treading down her nation.

A single man can do little towards the accomplishment of such objects, without the aid of wealth. The Unitarian felt this ; he devoted his talents to speculation, and in our rich empire he quickly amassed money ; he became a noble in the aristocracy of wealth, highly considered by the world ; in consequence, he gained influence and power, little lessened by the fact, that by the tricks and unseen wheels of his speculations, he every year contrived to ruin many, and that he always made the admission of Unitarianism a condition in his loans. To the influence of mere money, he added the weight of his supposed integrity, maintaining the utmost regularity in his dealings, that he might the better impose on the class of moneyed men, so important in England ; and he even put his name down to large subscriptions for Christian purposes, that he might impress society with his philanthropy. Every act of his had reference to the one object of propagating his faith, more because it was opposite to that of Catholics, than for any love he bore to his own.

Soon after his rejection by the young lady which had so excited his anger, he married a gentle quiet girl of his own persuasion, for the sake of a considerable fortune she possessed, and which he courted as the means of gaining more,

and so advancing his darling end. She died in giving birth to her first son, the Rupert with whom the reader is already acquainted. Mr. Schelling, from the first, looked on the boy as an additional instrument for his purpose ; for, like most planners of the future, he calculated overmuch on the obedience of those under his authority. And he had educated Rupert without a doubt of his future co-operation ; but latterly he had perceived that his son had ideas of his own, very decided, and deeply fixed. He had been alarmed at one or two symptoms of difference from his views, and he immediately determined to offer Rupert an apparently fair and unbiassed choice, between his own long accustomed religion, and the Catholic creed. He knew the effect this seeming candour would produce on the young man's mind, and he trusted that filial reverence and affection would counterbalance any wish he might have—if he had any—to adopt another religion. Still, he experienced great anxiety about him ; for Mr. Schelling felt how unattractive his cold and calculating creed would be to a mind like Rupert's. Even the fear of his possible secession tortured his father's mind ; to think of *his* son joining his bitter foes ; and such an upright, clever son ! The mere report of such a thing

would undo the work of his life, and he dreaded much to be so disappointed. After devoting so much care to the education of his son—to his preparation for the part he would have him play, he feared to find him inclined contrariwise, “the engineer hoist by his own petard”—his own son !

Mr. Schelling had not trusted in the deep-seated principles of good in men ; he had believed that characters were created by circumstances, and he had formed Rupert by habit to disbelieve Christianity, and had tried to guard him from even knowing its outlines. But the wind had blown where it listed ; it had breathed upon his son’s mind, and taught him that there is another power than reason, that men are ever unsatisfied, and thirsting for a distant perfection, that on account of sin, we cannot of ourselves attain to it, and that through the justness of the Creator, God alone by His advent could purchase the happiness, in other words, the perfection of mankind.

Mr. Schelling thought not of these things ; he studied men as men, not as creatures ; his faith was unbounded, but it was a faith in his fellows ; he looked not to the giver of their intelligence, and he cared not who inspired thought when discoveries were made ; he believed in mesmerism,

because it was a human power ; he trusted any visionary who prophesied of mortal greatness, though he felt almost a contempt for the author of the Bible.

His son, on the other hand, sought to explore the dimly-seen regions which lie beyond the confines of sensuous experience ; he had been a sickly child, and he had had much time for thought, and for the exercise of his imagination—that true imagination which is the mirror of truths intangible to reason—not fancy, which only repeats pictures of earth.

His early love for whatsoever was pure, for whatsoever was lovely, his thoughts of virtue, and of praise, had strengthened in him the longing which some men feel for truth. Religion, the link between man and his Creator, was of singular strength in him ; his own creed could not satisfy him, for it did not get beyond man, and he wanted to come at God.

His thoughts were much occupied on these subjects, during the winter on which accident had introduced him to the Mores. Before then, he had met with nothing but disappointment in the society of his father's friends. They appeared to him to be ever looking down at the earth, and the earth's produce, instead of, like him,

gazing upward. Their thoughts seemed concentrated, on the operations of themselves, or their fellows. Even their religion was selfish ; and if they thought at all on the subject, it was but with reference to their own rewards, or punishments.

This disregard of the beauties around them, brutish as it seemed to a mind organized as his was, disgusted him with his fellow men, and he was rapidly approaching the dangerous ground of misanthropy, when Mrs. More crossed his path. Her conversation was like a summer rain to his parched spirit. She thought as he did of the excellence in all things ; and, though he spoke not of controverted points to her, her mere character filled him with admiration for the Catholic belief, in the light of which she had grown up in all goodness.

A week seems short for such utter strangers to have thus seen into the depths of each others' characters, but minds rush quickly to their kindred minds, when they chance to meet, and little introduction is needed by fellow-seekers for truth. And Mrs. More was an earnest searcher for the scattered grains of it, which lie here and there, in all around us, and though her form was bent by old age, and withered from ill health, gloom

never showed itself on her countenance. Sorrow, indeed, there often was—deep sorrow ; but her tears were a shower through which the sun shone—the sun of her constant content, for at no time was her mind suffered to be over-cast by care.

It is customary to speak largely in praise of self-abnegation in these days. It is not a right word to express, that “doing unto others what we would they should do to us ;” and mischief, it seems to me, may result from its being made so prominent a virtue ; for it is contrary to our nature, and, consequently, a sin. I will not, therefore, in the fashionable language of the day, say that Mrs. More’s greatest excellence was her self-sacrifice. It was rather her self-love, which prompted her unwearied care of the poor, and her self-denial of every unnecessary pleasure, that she might aid others ; nor did she, as is too often done, neglect to use her influence among those of the upper classes whom she numbered in her acquaintance. Not that she pursued the injudicious plan of indiscriminately attacking the prejudices of others ; but she lost no opportunity of instilling good, and she considered this a prior duty to instructing the poor, at least one, that in the order of things, should be first attended to.

She had done much good, and the tone of the society in which she moved, had been raised, not to a sectarian austerity, but to Catholicism. Through her friends, her principles filtered down to the poor, and as, in country parts, the rich are often the chief sources of wrong or right principles, among those who are below them in station, she set herself to make friends, and to encourage society, that she might perform her due part in its improvement.

It may be said, that we have no business to interfere either for good or evil with the principles of our neighbours. Mrs. More did not think so; she held that every man was a missionary, and that to improve his fellow men was a duty second only to his own self-discipline. She had found Rupert Schelling eager for knowledge, and she earnestly endeavoured to assist him, by leading him to the universal religion, the harmony, to whose notes all creations accord; the harmony, of which the melody is Christianity.

Major Wyndham, too, had felt the charm of her sweet influences; a strange power seemed to assist her—it was the power of her earnestness—because she worked for the Cause, and not for her own success.

With such anxiety for the good of others, and

strict notions of our duty in promoting it, Mrs. More's pain at her son's countenance of an infidel religion, may be imagined to have been intense, but she would not interfere by a personal request ; she would not let affection outweigh his own judgment, for she distrusted the permanency of such a feeling, and she wished him to undertake at once his own responsibility. He had done so ; he had consulted expediency, or at least, followed a doubtful course, and he had received already the sum of money, which he intended to work the counterbalancing good for the wrong act, that he could not but feel he had committed. She was confident that, one day, he would retrace his steps, for his was not the character she thought, to persevere in what conscience condemned. Cathal was like her in his admiration of right, and his acknowledgement of the necessity of following duty.

He had not, however, either her determination, or her perseverance in sifting principles of action ; his fault was indecision and weakness. He was a true specimen of the Milesian family, chivalrous in his sense of honour, unblemished in his actions, and religious in his tone of mind, indeed, almost superstitious ; but the indolence of his race had deadened his powers of perception, and

he failed to perceive clearly the fallacies of Mr. Schelling's arguments, because the weapons of intelligence which had been committed to him for his defence, had become inefficient from disuse. There were moments when it seemed to him that he was wrong, but indolence checked his further inquiry,—“the enemy took him unawares.”

There is a common notion about the Milesian race, which is most erroneous; they are described in the strange accounts of the Irish, which are published now-a-days, by authors who must be ignorant of their real character, as a merry rolling people, possessing superficial characters, and potato faces. No account could be more opposed to the reality. The Milesian type is rare now, but where it exists, it is strikingly suggestive of its Castilian ancestry. Cathal's silent reserve and dignified gravity, would have suited the court of Ferdinand and Isabella; his dark lustrous eyes and regular features reminded me of a still remoter age, when his forefathers led the Phenician colonies to the boundaries of the then known world, and when his race excelled all others in splendour and civilization. He could claim affinity with the ‘godlike’ Greek of Homer's time, and he belonged to the family of those Castilians, who appeared to the

inhabitants of the new world, as deities, so noble was their form. He was not unworthy of such a descent, nor was nobility of mind wanting, but the original energy of his race had been worn out, and this success had sowed in them the seeds of indolence.

We may see in history how this inert spirit creeps on the old age of nations, but especially on that of those who have achieved the finest works, and the greatest success. In Greece and Spain, the Phenician race yet exist in their decay, showing noble forms of the past. In their colony, Ireland, too, the shadow of their greatness is fast fading, and suffering the contempt and scorn which fallen nobility ever receives from the vulgar. Yet even among the encroachments of the Northern races, some graceful pillars of the ruined past yet remain, as types of its ancient beauty, and Cathal was one of these, reminding us of his forefathers, and causing us to sorrow for their loss, when we look upon their noble vestiges.

CHAPTER X.

Not long after, Major Wyndham left us to go to England, but he did not seem quite so eager for the change, as he had maliciously informed Mrs. Peter ; on the contrary, he evidently regretted his friends at Cappagh, as he rode slowly and thoughtfully through the village on his departure. Nor was he less missed by those he left : Mrs. More had learned to like him much, and Cathal was sorry to lose the agreeable and well-informed companion, who, by his presence, served to render less noticeable the slight constraint, which had clogged his intercourse with his mother, since his acceptance of Mr. Schelling's proposal. At the rectory, too, his morning visits were regretted : for there was a charm about his manner, against which none could be proof. Mrs. Peter and her daughter had flitted from the neighbourhood nearly as quickly as they came ; they knew that after their discomfiture, by Major Wyndham, they had little chance of pleasing his intimate friend ;

their occupation was gone in the neighbourhood of Cappagh.

Mrs. Peter, however, was not unmindful of Major Wyndham's hint about his rich subaltern, for she was determined to "leave no stone unturned," which might conceal a treasure of gold; and she conveniently remembered that another "intimate and old friend," lived within a mile or two of the —th Hussars' head quarters. At her house she established herself, and manœuvered so successfully, that before long Mr. Parks was fairly ensnared by "My Barby." Meantime, Mr. Schelling's loan was duly received by Cathal, and, after the discharge of his father's debts, which had been mostly incurred in small sums, he found himself with a surplus of nearly two thousand pounds, with which to carry on his projected drainage works.

Nothing could be more prosperous than the state of Ireland at that time; those connected with land were in the zenith of their prosperity, and rapidly improving in the art of agriculture. Every side of affairs presented a fair view; and even political agitation, which has ever been the misfortune of Ireland, was for the time hushed.

When Cathal attained his majority, which he did, the reader will remember, at an unusually late

age, the condition of the More estate was so thriving, that an increase of the rental was readily made, from the low rate at which the tenants had held under Mrs. More's management, to one more suited to what was thought the risen value of the land. The village of Cappagh too, had been much added too, and it was one of the most orderly and thriving in the country, for Cathal's father had spent large sums of money in building the neat rows of white-washed and slated cottages, which lined nearly a quarter of a mile of road. His hobby had been to encourage the cottier system—and his wife, Mrs. More, carrying out his intentions, had fostered by all the means in her power, and assisted the growth, of the picturesque hamlet.

It had been the landlord's plan, that by labour, given either on his own grounds or by the neighbouring farmers, each cottier should be maintained; and to each house was only attached sufficient land to supply the necessary potatoes for a family, including that cherished member of it—the pig.

So favourable had the late Mr. More been to the sub-division of his estate, that he had not even guarded against the system of partitioning farms, among the tenants' children, which is so common

in Ireland. He thought that increase of population would only follow, in a safe proportion, increase of industry and improved husbandry ; and he had tried to give a stimulus to this improvement, by employing many labourers on his own land, and building the village for their accommodation. He did not live to carry out his schemes, but at his death he committed the management of his property to his wife, and that she might uninterruptedly fulfil his wishes, he purposely delayed the majority of his son.

She followed his steps as closely as she could, and during the twenty years of her unintermitting labours, a swarming population had gathered in the little town her husband had founded.

Under such circumstances, those who know anything of Ireland can imagine to what an extent, what is called the "con-acre system" was carried on ; and the potato-crop became the chief source of profit to the neighbouring farmers. It was, indeed, the largeness of their gains in this way, that enabled them with ease to pay rents to Cathal which otherwise they could not have made.

No village could be prettier than was Cappagh in 1844 ; fine old elm-trees, shaded the rows of one-storied houses at either side, and trim hedges of sweetbriars, and Scotch roses divided each well-

stocked garden. The people under Mrs. More's tutelage, seemed to have really gained a love for flowers, for here and there a good carnation or double hollyhock showed itself in autumn.

A day seldom passed, during which some of the cottages were not visited by Mrs. More, not as a patroness, but as a friend ; treating her poorer neighbours with the same regard and delicacy of feeling, as she would those of a higher class. She carefully kept up the commemoration of holydays ; admitting, on such occasions, any who wished, into the park, or pleasure-gardens ; and often promoting games and dancing, on condition that they should not be prolonged till late in the evening.

The clergymen of both Anglican and Roman churches, generally joined in presiding at these merry-makings. Both were well-educated and thinking men ; and their learning had led them to discover the many points of union between the churches to which they were ministers. They dwelt on this similitude, and avoided exhibiting their dissensions, as is too often done, by controversialists ; for even though important differences do exist, why should feelings of ignorant animosity be kept up among the lower orders, by only pointing out the disputed questions, and ascribing the errors of individuals to the religion

they profess? Mr. Hyde and Father Connor, at least, thought it wisest to allay rather than to excite religious irritation; and speaking to their flocks, by their example, as by their words, they joined as much as might be in the observance of the same great catholic festivals.

Our rector was not one of those who hold that moroseness is a necessary sign of religion. It is, he thought, but a symptom of that finite and imperfect worship, which looks not beyond the man to the Creator. Truly it was suited, he said, to *our* state, to our fall, and its grievous consequences; but he exhorted his flock to look without, to what had been done for them, and surely they must rejoice. And I agree with him that it is too much a custom, even among sincere Christians, to put off their happiness to a future state; to think that because there we may hope for its perfection, we are to possess none here; but happiness *has* descended, and many of the glorious promises are already fulfilled.

We too much consider repentance and sorrow as the chief acts of religion; yet they refer only to ourselves, and they are mere preparations for worship. Mr. Hyde used to say that this mournfulness in the exercise of religion was but egotism, and that if we looked without ourselves,

we must join in the chant of praise which every created being, except man, continually offers up.

Shall I be misunderstood, if I say, that the Roman faith inclines men to offer up this sacrifice of thanksgiving more than the Anglican? For even a needful reformation tends also to egotism in religion; it causes men to devote their thoughts to seeing if they be right or wrong, and to matters of discipline. Reformers, of necessity, are ever examining the weak parts of the ladder by which Heaven is to be attained; they test the strength of each step, and in their zeal sometimes forget the Great End. In the Anglican church, I think we are still under the influence of this failing, and we forget to rejoice in the Author of all good, while we devote ourselves to considerations of our own faith, and our own feelings, some of us even attempting the task, so far beyond the powers of an individual, of arranging our own system of belief.

The Italian church, on the other hand, defines her articles of faith so clearly, to appearance at least, that her votaries have less grounds for perplexity, and devote themselves with more entire minds to the acts of religion.

Far be it from me in saying this to depreciate the excellence of our church: I would only express

my belief that the custom of disputing, and the many eccentricities of private judgment which prevail among us, are injurious to pure worship.

Mr. Hyde, at least, thought so ; he seldom touched upon controverted points, and, treating the foundations of our faith as indisputably secure, most of his instructions were devoted to inculcating the common duties, and setting forth the common privileges of Catholics.

On Sundays, the church and chapel bells tolled together in harmony, and after the several services the congregations separated, innocent of the self-sufficient pride with which a one-sided controversial sermon generally fills its hearers, but with their minds opened to the oneness of the end that both Anglican and Roman professions have in view.

Many will say such could not be, for the two creeds are antagonistic—differing they are—yet not utterly opposed, I think. Our desire to make the reformed cause seem the right one,—their hatred of heresy, has widened the breach, when, in reality, we are built on one and the same Rock.

When Cathal came of age, he seemed to be entering on a life of happy usefulness. When he undertook the management of his estates—eager to commence his different plans for the

improvement of his tenantry,—the possession of capital was the main temptation to which he gave way, in his bargain with Mr. Schelling. It was no personal advantage that swayed his decision, but a desire to serve others.

His drainage works went rapidly on in those early spring months, during which there is but little common-place agricultural employment. Every day he rode down to superintend the operations ; and soon the temporary annoyance of the condition annexed to his friend's loan was forgotten in the active good which, by it, he had been enabled to set going.

Towards the end of April, I was pleasantly surprised to see Major Wyndham ride past my dispensary, on his handsome chestnut horse, towards the gate of Cappagh Park. He was kind enough to stop and dismount when he saw me, while he asked, with much interest, how all his friends had been, during his two months' absence, but inquiring more particularly for Mrs. More and Miss Catherine Hyde. People generally spoke without caution to me. I believe it was because, in society, I was usually reserved, and so I had acquired a good name in the neighbourhood for never gossipping. It was not difficult to see, by Major Wyndham's manner,

that he was especially interested in our rector's second daughter ; perhaps, he thought it scarce worth his while to conceal from me that he was so. Yet, I could not but be struck by the complete absence of his first hauteur when he addressed me, and a little flattered by the kindness of her address ; for he was a great man to me—a leader of fashion—heir presumptive to his brother, a rich English baron,—and owner in his own right of a manor in Derbyshire.

“ I am really glad to return to my old quarters,” he said, as we went ; “ when I first arrived in this country, I did not anticipate such a sensation.”

“ I am glad,” I replied, “ you chanced to meet some true specimens of our Milesian nobility ; they are to the Irish what the Normans were in England ; they are the conquered, not the conquering race, however.”

“ The Northern nations have generally the upperhand,” he answered ; “ but is not this the path to the rectory ? Shall we try if they are at home ? ”

We found the Miss Hydes busy in their garden, sowing the tiny annual seeds, which seemed just fitted for their taper fingers ; they readily agreed to join us in our walk to Cappagh house :

indeed, it would have been difficult to refuse Major Wyndham's request, urged, as it was, with an earnestness of manner unusual in him.

Mrs. More seemed to have felt the influence of the bright spring day, for she met us with even more than her accustomed pleasure. Cathal, too, was fortunately at home, and he insisted that his friend should stay that night, and that our whole party, with the addition of Mr. Hyde, whom he sent for, should dine that evening at Cappagh.

Major Wyndham had not before been thoroughly domesticated among us, and heretofore his manners had been alloyed by the scorn and satire which the follies of others had called forth; but, on this occasion, he appeared in a more pleasing character. We discovered that he possessed a really fine tenor voice; for standing behind the young ladies, as they were attempting to reduce a trio into a duet, his voice quietly stole into harmony with theirs, as he supplied the missing part.

We begged them to continue; but Agnes, finding that he was best acquainted with her sister's favourite music, resigned her place to him, and he and Catherine sang song after song, their voices increasing in power and harmony, while we all

sat silent and quieted by the pleasant sounds, until the clock striking a late hour warned us to separate. And then the quiet Englishman ran hastily for shawls and cloaks, and was almost moved to anxiety because it was raining, and Mr. Hyde's carriage was an open one.

I was not surprised the next day to see him sauntering towards the rectory, or to hear that he had promised to stay another week with the Mores ; for, old man as I am, I was not blind to the symptoms of this attachment for Catherine.

Spring time suggests such feelings : it is a season of so much happiness, that for the time we seem to be imbued with the youth and hopefulness on all sides. Even old age becomes green.

The increased gravity and yet the increased content of Catherine Hyde's expression, which I observed within the week of Major Wyndham's arrival, explained to me what had happened. The shadow of her coming soul, to use the beautiful allegory of Undine, had fallen upon her—she had entered the enchanted ground of love. Not the fabled love, the son of mere beauty, but that more exalted power, which has served to typify the most sublime of all unions. It comes on youth as a freshening breeze, before

men enter the parched plains of life—it is the “shadow of a great rock in a weary land.”

But this is not a love-story, and there was little in Major Wyndham's and Catherine's affection to describe. It flowed in an even current ; there were no objections on either side to the match. Lady Hunsdon, Catherine's nearest relation on her mother's side, was delighted, and wrote to offer her country place for their honeymoon. Mrs. More was also much pleased, though perhaps not for the same reasons ; she felt all the happiness of a mother in Catherine's bright prospect for life.

It was one of those occasions, when the fullest amount of earthly prosperity seemed the lot of the betrothed ; not a cloud darkened their horizon.

Why do we see this inequality of happiness ? Why have Major Wyndham and Catherine so large a share, when, perhaps, others have better deserved it ?

These questions almost involuntarily escaped me, as, with Mrs. More, I was sauntering among the wilderness of wild-flowers that carpeted Cap-pagh woods in the month of May.

“To try the patience of the sufferers,” she replied ; “to teach us to work, not for reward, but for the sake of right.”

“Yet it seems contrary to justice,” I continued; for though in reality I did not dispute the point, I wished to know her thoughts on it—“that even in this present condition the good should often suffer most.”

“Can we judge if they do?” she replied. “We cannot weigh the merits of any man; and even in cases of flagrant wrong, the instant punishment in the present order of society, of the individual who commits it, might involve the injury of innocent people dependent on him—”

“Still,” I said, “the existence of such a state of things provokes doubts among the weak, as to the exercise of a moral government.”

“Because we are ignorant of the cause, to deny the fact, is a common error. In this case, however, I think our doubts will be removed by looking to a future state, when the present apparent inequalities in our being will be smoothed away—when the crooked shall be made straight.”

“But is not this doubtfulness of reward a hindrance to our following virtue?”

“Not if we look at the whole subject.”

“I confess,” I answered, “though, of course, I admit it as an acknowledged fact, I do not quite understand why there should be even this appearance of injustice.”

“To prevent our acting from mercenary motives,” she said. “For such would negative the virtue of every act which consists in doing right for its own sake.”

“But surely you believe,” I said, “that virtue will sooner or later reap its reward. Does not that belief, according to your theory, nullify virtue?”

“Rewards in this life are so uncertain,” she replied, “that no man can count on them. Revealed religion enters into the question of future rewards, and interferes with our natural notions of mere virtue and its recompense.”

“That is scarcely a fair way of discussing the difficulty,” I replied; “and, though Christianity alters the condition of man, it does not change the truths connected with our moral state.”

“It is, rather, dovetailed into them,” she answered; “but, to speak more correctly what I meant to imply, we can only arrive at a certain expectancy of future rewards through faith. Now this faith alone draws its evidence of rewards not seen, from revelation, where side by side of the promises of recompense, are recorded, assurances that our virtue is of itself utterly incapable of securing them; as we have equal grounds for doing so, so we equally receive these doctrines.”

“Then you think the assertions of our demerit in Holy Writ are thus a balance to the effect on our motives, that promises of reward might have?”

“It appears to me, that this design might be traced, for it is as contrary to justice to suppose there will be no reward, as it would be to virtue, to act merely in reference to future recompense.”

“How can we distinguish them?” I asked.
“How can we get rid of the prospect of reward?”

“It will not be for our acts, but by the atonement of another, that we may gain it.”

“There must still be a certain merit, to reap the benefit of that atonement; then it becomes a reward, and our acts will be in reference to it.”

“No, for by the harmony in Christianity, it is because it is our duty, not because of the reward, that we are faithful; but the present inequality of the requital is also to be admired, for it gives a field for the exercise of patience and contentment, and leads us to look forward to a future. For the principle of justice is innate in us, and when we perceive its full measure is not given to us here, we turn to some hereafter, when all will be righted according to its laws.”

“It is certainly singular,” I replied, “how we are constantly obliged to look to some Past and some Future, when we think of these things.”

“So, in all natural truth,” she replied, “we may see the embryo of revealed religion.”

“And yet how men separate them!” I said, “as if natural religion and revelation were opposing systems—as if there were a different God in each!”

“I think,” she replied, “preachers of revelation neglect too much His aspect as origin of all, in their representation of what we may call his human form, and so they leave a space of natural truth, on which free-thinkers and sceptics build their creed. In this way, there has come an apparent schism, in what is really but one universal religion.”

“I wish people would remember that all truth emanates from God, as much as the Christian scheme. But,” said I, after a pause, “one remark of yours seems to militate against the doctrine of our insufficiency—you make the performance of faith as a duty obtain for us the benefit of the atonement.”

“I may be wrong,” she replied, “but it seems to me there must be the fulfilment of a condition on our parts, to do so : this condition is faith.”

“Yet some maintain that every movement of religion must emanate from God—that we are powerless.”

“ And so I believe it does ; but that we receive at our birth the capacity of being faithful, in common with our other powers ; and that after that first gift we are intended of ourselves to use the means of religion given us. This, at least, is my theory. I would make faith a work. Our language does not express the difference between the mere acknowledgment of a fact, and that belief which is an act, and this creates confusion in our way of speaking.”

“ We have been discussing very difficult questions,” I said, after a pause.

“ Very ; but it is good to exercise the mind, that we may be able to give a reason to ourselves for the faith we profess.”

CHAPTER XI.

WOODLAND scenery seems to have a peculiar charm for lovers, and I often met Major Wyndham and Catherine sauntering through the forest-paths of Cappagh ; they sometimes asked me to join them, an invitation I seldom accepted, for I knew they were avaricious of private conversation.

Catherine's blue eyes gained a darker, more violet hue than before, and I fancied I could look deeper into them, though perhaps they did not possess such sparkling light as formerly. Her cheek was paler, her walk was slower, and more lingering, and sometimes of a calm May day, as she sat by Major Wyndham, she seemed over-burdened with happiness. And his cold reserve and habitual contempt for the world seemed to disappear, and his laugh often echoed among the trees, as it had never before done.

After a very hard winter, the spring and summer were unusually fine, and Mrs. More, who thoroughly delighted in promoting the pleasure

of others, planned all manner of pleasant little fêtes and expeditions among the mountains. We lived almost together;—a day seldom passed that the Mores did not dine at the rectory, or the Hydes at Cappagh, and I was a constant guest at either house.

We were preparing to start one morning for a distant glen,—it was a service of danger, and they insisted on the doctor being present!—and busily packing up our luncheon in the well of the Irish car, which was, on such occasions, our favourite vehicle, when Mrs. and Miss Peter drove up, leading Mr. Parks after them, as if in celebration of a triumph.

It was a disagreeable interruption, and our party looked blank enough at first; but the ludicrousness of Mr. Parks' expression quickly changed the annoyance into amusement. The redness of his eyes had become more visible than before, for his face had grown paler and longer. Miss Peter was very smartly dressed, and seemed in overflowing spirits, and quite wound up to bow and acquiesce in everything. Her mother's grim face "wore a ghastly smile," and she often spoke to Mrs. More of the evil of worldliness, and the incalculable importance of "the one thing needful." They did not fortunately

detain us long, as they had some more visits to pay ; but, before they went, they entreated the Mores to allow them to have a pic-nic at Cappagh, and to join it. Mrs. More, however unwilling, felt it would be churlish and exclusive to refuse, though I detected a look of annoyance on her countenance when Mrs. Peter announced, with an important air, that Lady Louisa Chetwode had “ consented to patronize the affair.”

“ Several of your brother officers,” she continued, addressing Major Wyndham, “ are coming, at the instance of my dearest Parks, and it only needs your consent to obtain your unrivalled band for the auspicious occasion.”

“ What shall I say ?” he asked of Mrs. More, in a low tone.

“ I suppose it must be,” she replied, “ if you like, pray say yes.”

And so it was settled, and the Peter party drove away ; having a good deal disarranged our previous peace of mind, by the announcement of their intended invasion. Nevertheless, we started for the glen, and during the drive, it was determined that all the party should do their best to be agreeable, and Cathal promised to have a cottage in the park arranged for the visitors to dine and dance in, if they wished,

afterwards. Who would be there, was of course discussed ; and as Mrs. Peter and the friend at whose house she was staying—(a Mrs. Spratt,—) seemed to be chief managers of the party, some reasonable doubts were expressed, of the class of people who would form it.

“However,” said Mrs. More, “let us, at all events, do our duty as hosts, even though the office has been somewhat forced upon us.”

“Who is this Mrs. Spratt?” asked Major Wyndham.

“She is the wife of a distiller, at———; her husband is, I believe, very rich, but I don’t think any friends of ours have had much intercourse with her.”

“I hear,” remarked Cathal, “that these Chetwodes have taken her up, and she has been giving a series of dinner parties this last month on the strength of it, for every one goes, because Lady Louisa will.”

“How very Irish!” exclaimed Major Wyndham ; “she is English, and that gives her a licence to reform the county society.”

“Half her guests go to laugh,” Cathal answered ; “my friend O’Neil was at one of these ‘re-unions,’ as she calls them, last week, but he says he will not go again.”

“Why, what happened?” we exclaimed.

“He was seeking a cool place for Miss Peter, after a somewhat violent galop, and they wandered into a conservatory which was not lighted. It was before her engagement with Parks was finally arranged, and she was enjoying rather a sentimental flirtation *en attendant*, when something like a cold, clammy hand touched O’Neil’s cheek. He thought the sensation extraordinary, but said nothing. However, as they were repassing, his other cheek received a similar salutation.”

“Do you feel anything?” he asked with a perturbed voice of Miss Peter, who at the moment was sighing like a furnace.

“Feel anything!” she replied; “I am a soul made up of feeling.”

This rather silenced O’Neil, who thought he had better ask no more questions, and with a cold shiver, he proposed returning to the light, where, re-assured by a pair of wax-candles, he told his story to some of the party. They determined to storm the ghost *en masse*; every one feeling it was a kind of Mystery of Udolpho; however, numbers made them brave, and they marched in procession, each carrying a candle, to the haunted greenhouse. O’Neil and Miss Peter, assuming the right of discovery, led the way. And sure

enough, when they had come to the spot, they were all aghast at the sight of a long white form, with glassy eyes, and disfigured by gaping wounds, hanging from the roof, right across the way."

"And what was it?" asked Catherine.

"The mortal remains of a fat pig, which had been hung there for convenience. As soon as Miss Peter had found a favourable position for the purpose, she fainted away, with much pomp and circumstance. O'Neil, however, by the help of a watering-pot, brought her to."

"What strange people," said Agnes Hyde.

"Very good-natured vulgarians, but very rich. It is said, that Chetwode owes him some thousands, and that it is for that reason that he encourages this kind of society. They were never heard of until this spring."

"Hayward, I believe, took his wife there," said Major Wyndham; "I heard some story about preserved cucumbers."

"I heard of that, too," exclaimed Cathal; "Mrs. Hayward praised some preserves there were for dessert, and when she put her hand in the pocket of her carriage coming home, to find a book, she drew it out daubed with sticky sugar syrup. Mrs. Spratt had ordered some of the

cucumbers to be sent ; her servants packed them up in brown paper, and the consequences were most lamentable to Hayward's carriage."

"It was almost a new brougham," said Major Wyndham ; "Hayward was very angry."

"Haut-ton-ville, as they call it, is just the kind of place for Mrs. Peter to luxuriate in," said Cathal ; "for the Spratts are so good-natured, she may stay there for ever, and they will manage the wedding-breakfast for her daughter."

"What a female Napoleon she is," said Major Wyndham ; "her tactics are wonderful. Why it was rather brave, her proposing this party to you, Mrs. More."

"Shall we ask any of our own friends ?" asked Cathal.

"I think not, we had best leave it entirely to the proposers ; and if the guests are pleasant people, so much the better ; if not, on them be the blame."

As she spoke, we drove into the village ; I was set down at my own door, and I did not see my friends again until the day of Mrs. Peter's party, which they had pressed me to join. At the unfashionable hour of three o'clock, I found myself with Agnes Hyde, beginning to look out for the visitors ; Major Wyndham and Catherine were, she told me, reading "The Excursion" together ; and did

not intend, until it was absolutely necessary, to join the rest of the party.

After five o'clock, Mrs. More thought she must have mistaken the day Mrs. Peter had named for a *morning* party ; but at six a smoking tandem appeared, driven by a very gaily-dressed lady, who carried an eye-glass, without setting, and stared about her a good deal.

“ Where is Chetwode ? and what can have become of the horde that were behind us ? ” I heard her ask.

“ Here they are, notwithstanding the pace we came at,” said her companion, whom I recognised as Captain Hayward ; and a drag, a britschka, and two hack cars came in sight.

“ I'm glad they've come, for some one must have introduced me to these people,” said Lady Louisa Chetwode, for it was her.

Miss Peter and Mr. Parks were seated together on the highest pinnacle of the drag ; she looked far more at her ease than he did ; for on such occasions, I have heard, his chronic failing of the head, came sadly against him. The rest of the vehicles were crowded by officers and young ladies, whose faces were new to me ; however, that was not to be wondered at, as I seldom go beyond the bounds of my visiting district.

Mrs. More exerted herself to receive them civilly ; the carriages and horses were sent to the stables, and a walk was proposed round the immediate pleasure-grounds, while dinner was being prepared. Mrs. More guided Lady Louisa, but so quiet a companion did not content the "*lionne*;" and when she came to the steep grass slope, which slanted down the glen to the river, she proposed a general run down it, in the manner of Greenwich fair.

All the party, even fat Mrs. Spratt, and stiff Mrs. Peter, thought it was a new-fashioned game, and as such, they felt obliged to join. Of course Mrs. More did not, and I stayed with her, but every one else followed Lady Louisa. In the race poor Mr. Parks was next to her, and, just as they reached the edge of the river, I observed her add to his already unmanageable impetus, by a slight, and apparently accidental push.

In he went, splashing and floundering, for the water was nearly four feet deep at the spot ; and while Cathal was trying good-naturedly to fish him out, Lady Louisa, when she had sufficiently amused herself at the sight of his distress, walked away with an air of graceful unconcern.

Poor man ! he was in a deplorable state of wet when he landed, and divided between anger and

fear ; however, a change of clothes, and some hot wine and water, enabled him to join us at dinner, within half an hour.

It was such a dinner as is usual on such occasions, when it is eaten in a rural cottage ; but unfortunately, everybody had brought a cold ham and cheese-cakes, most of which had suffered on the road. Happily, Mrs. More's larder was at hand, so such misfortunes could be remedied, and the general good appetite did not seem to object to the plentiful garnishing of flies and spiders to every dish.

Before we sat down, Major Wyndham and Catherine joined us, as unobservedly as they could—not, however, unspied by Mrs. Peter, who delivered a very formal address on the beauty of youthful affection, expressing at the same time her trust and hope, that the “one thing needful” would never be forgotten by them.

Major Wyndham gravely thanked her, observing that to do so, he had but to follow her and Miss Peter's example. “A late occasion,” he added, with a comical deference of manner, “had proved their sincerity and earnestness in pursuing this great object of their lives.”

The smile that broke over Cathal's face as his friend spoke, and the glimmer of irrepressible

amusement on Catherine's, quite disconcerted Mrs. Peter, and her daughter looked for a moment uncomfortable ; but changing the subject she turned to Mr. Parks, with a complacent smile, (he had been carefully set by her side, by Mrs. Peter,) and said—

“Do, love, eat some pepper with your potatoes ; you must let me nurse you after your accident.”

“I feel so ill ;” he murmured, “I wish I had never come to Ireland.”

Mrs. More, with as little delay as possible, made a signal for the ladies to adjourn, while the room was being cleared and got ready for a dance ; and as they left it, I saw that Lady Louisa offered her, with the kindest and most deferential manner, her assistance in walking up the steep hill leading from the cottage. Mrs. More seemed a little surprised ; however, when we joined them afterwards by the river-side, they seemed to have found an interesting subject for conversation. In truth, Lady Louisa was a person of some talent, and a great deal of good nature. She had married when very young ; and previously, when Major Wyndham had admired her, she was in manner as quiet and lady-like as need be. Her husband, however, introduced her to the fast society of which he was a member, and had re-

quired her to adopt their customs and pursuits. What she would have herself refused to do, became, under her husband's auspices, she thought, allowable, and her talent soon gave her a first place in his set. Constant dissipation blunted before long the feminineness of her character, and with it, the respect and love for her husband, which had been the means of her deterioration. In short, she became an untiring flirt ; and longing for some fresh excitement, and to achieve an apparently impossible victory, she resolved to draw her former admirer, Major Wyndham, from Catherine, strengthened, perhaps, in her resolution by some mortifying recollections of his former neglect to herself.

She was extremely pretty, and her small Hebe face seemed to promise an amiable, feminine character. Whatever she attempted she did well ; and from being perfectly self-possessed and fearless, she could hunt and even shoot on certain occasions, better than most men. When one looked at her small hand and taper fingers, loading a gun, one almost forgot that it was an instrument of death ; and even the dress which Cathal had described with so much disgust, did not look masculine on her, for she possessed the peculiar charm that belongs to some, of casting a grace

over all her acts, that made them only the more fascinating for their singularity—charming the very man who, away from her glamour, would be the first to condemn them.

Her rooms at Chetwode House were arranged with a perfect taste even; the whip and spurs, hanging over the chimney-piece of her boudoir, scarcely seeming out of place, for, they were a foil to her, making one smile, to think of such a slight, graceful person using them. But though her chief pursuit was admiration, she could be really pleasing even to old ladies; and as Mrs. More ever sought for good in her companions, and tried to draw out their best qualities, we found them apparently, mutually pleased, when Major Wyndham and I met them in their walk by the river side.—He asked, in a low voice, where he should find Catherine.

“You must not monopolize her to night,” she replied, smiling, “or you will incur some remarks from Mrs. Peter.”

“I do not wonder at your annoyance, Major Wyndham,” said Lady Louisa, in a low sweet voice. He started, the sound was so different from what he had expected—so like what he had been attracted by six years before.

“You know these beautiful grounds,” she con-

tinued ; “ will you be my guide to the waterfall ? for Mrs. More seems fatigued. If we meet Miss Hyde, you must let me make her acquaintance.”

Her voice and manner were irresistible, and with a flattered air he accompanied her ; Mrs. More withdrew to rest for a short time, and I sauntered about, observing the different groups as they wandered about, Watteau-like, on the shaven lawns.

But, as was often the case, I fell into a reverie ; and to indulge it undisturbed, I turned down a terrace which ran parallel to the river, and sat down by the stream, to listen, after the hot June day, to its fresh sound, and to the distant voices, which, gaining harmony from the twilight, echoed clearly, in the still evening.

“ Amongst them I could distinguish Major Wyndham’s and Lady Louisa Chetwode’s, as they came towards me from the more distant woods, which they had been exploring. They spoke of the past, and she seemed to be excusing herself to him as I heard her say—

“ The world’s harsh judgment has I know fallen upon me, but I do not deserve it ; *you* can understand my utter repugnance to the scenes in which I am forced to act a part ; you know what I was.”

“Do not remind me of the past, of what might have been,” he said hastily; “but even now my earnest sympathy may avail—we may still be friends. Why, why did I believe London reports six years ago?” he exclaimed.

I rose, that they might see me; for I perceived that their conversation was private, and of a kind I could not trust myself patiently to hear. I was turning away, when I saw that Catherine Hyde had been standing silently a little behind me, and by her pale, startled look, I saw she had heard, as I did, what Major Wyndham had said.—She seemed growing faint, and I anxiously offered her my arm, but not in time to save her from sinking on the bank where I had been sitting. At the same moment Major Wyndham appeared; he started when he saw her, for the truth flashed upon him; and I shall never forget the deep sorrow, the misery of his expression, as he leant passionately over her.

Lady Louisa walked slowly and musingly away; perhaps she was asking herself if the pleasure of coquetry was equivalent to the pain she had caused.

At last, Catherine somewhat recovered. I motioned Major Wyndham to stand a little back.

“What has happened?” she asked. I was about to say something that might lead her thoughts

from the cause of her illness, but he started forward impatiently.

“It is I, Catherine, I, who am unworthy of you ; I scarcely dare hope for forgiveness, and yet if a life of atonement——”

She was for a moment silent, but collecting herself, she said—

“You might again repeat those words, Major Wyndham ; I will no longer tax your kindness.” She spoke with apparent coldness, but she was pale with the effort. He seemed surprised at her calmness, and turned away with a look of deep suffering.

“Miss Hyde,” I said, “I fear for your strength ; let me take you home.”

She mechanically took my arm, and we silently walked towards the house. On the way, we met Mrs. More, and I quickly explained the the cause, as delicately as I could, to her. She felt that it was necessary to draw a veil, if possible, over the unfortunate occurrence ; so she forced herself to return to the painful society of Lady Louisa Chetwode and her companions, leaving Catherine under my charge.

She begged to be alone ; and as she really had much recovered, I left her, and joined the rest of the party. They were dancing, to the music of

a band ; and, except for the absence of Major Wyndham, and Agnes, who had gone to her sister, all were as I had left them. Lady Louisa looked softer and more fascinating than ever, and I heard her account for the Miss Hydes and Major Wyndham's absence, by some careless remark about 'lovers quarrels !' ”

“ Can heartlessness really be carried so far ? ” I thought ; and many fancies crowded into my mind, as I tried to account for the selfishness at every hand.

I stood leaning against the door, paying little heed to the dancers, as they flitted before me, when I was struck by a naïve remark from Mrs. Spratt's eldest daughter—

“ How I should like to live in a drum ! ”

“ Oh dear ! it makes my head ache so,” her partner, Mr. Parks, replied.

“ How nice it will be,” whispered to him Miss Peter, who had taken his arm, the moment the waltz had concluded ; “ we can be married, Amy,” for so she abbreviated his name, “ on the same day as Major Wyndham and Catherine Hyde.”

“ I was just about to submit to your attention,” said Mrs. Peter, in her most dignified manner, to Mrs. More, “ the advantages which

would result from the unions of our two dear ones being fixed for the same day."

It was a painful discussion for Mrs. More, and she replied—

"I do not know Major Wyndham's or Catherine's wishes on the subject. It is possible that their intended marriage may not take place at once."

"Indeed!" drawled Mrs. Peter, her leaden eyes opening to their full width, as if eager to hear of some untoward event. "I always thought," she added, "Major Wyndham was not quite to be depended on."

"I am at a loss to understand you," said Mrs. More, quietly.

"I should quite feel for poor Catherine," said Mrs. Peter.

"Ah, poor thing!" interrupted her daughter. "Has she met with any disappointment?"

Mrs. More looked thoroughly annoyed, and, as it was growing late, she rose, and with a somewhat distant bow, she bade the company good night.

Before she had been gone many minutes, Mrs. Peter had spread a report that "Major Wyndham's engagement was broken off," and the party broke up with much gossip and whispering on

the subject ; Lady Louisa Chetwode smiling, with a peculiarly amiable expression, at the various reports that were circulated.

While they were getting their carriages, and arranging the order of their departure, I hurried up to the house, and on the way I was overtaken by Cathal, who hastily asked me what had given rise to Mrs. Peter's impertinence.

"I saw Wyndham," he continued, "looking very unhappy, in my study, but I had not time to ask him the cause."

"He has been much to blame," said I ; "indeed, I hardly know how he can repair the mischief he has done."

"How—what was it?" he exclaimed.

"Some words about his past and present prospects," I replied, "which he spoke to Lady Louisa Chetwode, by accident Catherine overheard them."

"And she is very angry, of course—we must try and soften matters," he replied ; "he seems heartily sorry."

I found Catherine still pale and ill, suffering much ; I prescribed some little soothing draught, and while I was preparing it from the materials I found in Mrs. More's well-stocked medicine chest, a loud knock sounded at the hall door, and

we heard a voice asking for a light for Lady Louisa Chetwode's cigarette.

I waited till the last sound of the carriage wheels had died away, when I took my leave, sorrowing much over this unfortunate party, and making many reflections on the injury that may ensue from the smallest deviation from right. Had he but thought, I said to myself, he could not have so foolishly erred.

CHAPTER XII.

CATHERINE HYDE was not very hard-hearted, and Major Wyndham soon convinced her that his conduct had been but a momentary forgetfulness, and one of which he heartily repented. Mr. Hyde, however, was seriously alarmed, and he and Mrs. More determined not to part with their beloved charge until the character of her betrothed had been more fully tested. Their marriage was put off for at least a year, notwithstanding the most vehement remonstrances from Major Wyndham ; still he was not exiled from Cappagh, and he received a general invitation to come there whenever he got leave of absence. Of course, he did not visit Chetwode House, nor join in any society in which Lady Louisa was likely to appear during his probation, he frequented Mrs. More's society more closely than ever, and he seemed to gain proportionately in strength of character and refinement of mind. It was during the autumn of the summer which I have described, that the first rumour of the potato blight was

heard.—Well do I remember the arrival of that startling news.

There was a party at Cappagh for the partridge-shooting in September, and one morning, while we were reading our letters, a Mr. Daly from Galway read a paragraph aloud, taken from the report of his steward. It ran thus:—"A singular blight has appeared in your field of potatoes, particularly where the ground was most manured. I never saw anything like it before nor did any of the neighbours; the stalks are black and withered, without there having been severe frosts; the roots are spotted with black, and have a bad smell when boiled."

"That is curious," said Cathal, "I will tell Reilly to examine mine."

"Oh it is only some partial failure," said Mr. Daly. "I am a most unlucky farmer."

The potato crop is always a matter of deep interest to Irishmen, though from its healthiness, and immense productiveness, we had got somewhat careless about its management; and none of the party were altogether inattentive to the report, though it was considered, according to Mr. Daly's suggestion, only a partial injury; so we all sallied forth, first to the garden, and then to the farm, to judge for ourselves. In the garden they

were completely withered, and some roots which had just been dug, quite answered the description that had been written of them.

For the first few days, no one seemed to appreciate the great misfortune which had befallen Ireland. Before a week was over, however, the papers teemed with reports from all parts of the land, of the fearful disease which had come like a plague on the subsistence of the nation. All manner of prophecies and strange coincidences filled the thoughts of those who were superstitiously predisposed, while active and stirring minds sought on every side a remedy for the evil.

The resources of chemistry were tried ; its professors wearied themselves with experiments on the diseased plant. Many pamphlets and public letters were written, but all in vain. Men's minds failed to discover the cause, or check the ill effects of this supernatural injury. I call it supernatural,—for when an event happens which is totally unaccountable and incomprehensible—which plunges a nation into unexampled ruin, and which cannot be even palliated by the inventions of man, in this age of many inventors—one must be sceptical indeed, and blind, not to see the Divine handwriting on the wall.

As, however, natural causes must be examined,

and human palliations tried in every case, men eagerly attempted to undo the mischief. The potatoes were kiln-dried, limed, made into starch ; but the disease still spread, and we were at last forced to confess that it was incurable.

Long-headed men saw anxiously, how fearfully endangered the country was by this failure of its chief produce, and the chief support of its swarming population.

Mrs. More was one of the most active in trying to remedy the evil of the potato disease, and in teaching the people how best to procure and prepare the grain which was partly substituted for the former food. She was very anxious when she pictured a repetition of the failure—but she trusted that there would not probably be another. It had, perhaps, she thought, been caused by some hard frost, some baleful fog. Even if, as some said, it was the work of an insect, it was most likely, she hoped, but a temporary blight ; besides, new, and strange, and, therefore, alarming as the loss was, there was still much left. The early-sown plants had yielded more than half their due produce.

We had not then learned the bitter experience of the successive and unaccountable annihilations of the crop. In 1845, it was a matter of

alarmed forethought and curious inquiry ; and the great darkness which afterwards fell upon the nation, was then but a black shadow in the distance, which few men regarded ; and, if they did, they calculated, with the pride of human ingenuity, on being able to avert its nearer approach.

Cathal that year received his usual rents, and exerted himself to give labour to those of the villagers who had been dependant, either on con-acre potatoes, or on the produce of their own gardens.... He freely spent any surplus of Mr. Schelling's loan which remained, to this end ; and both his estate and the poor were benefitted by the works which he eagerly conducted. He made all his own plans and arrangements ; and in the busy occupation into which he was thus forced, by his good-hearted anxiety for the welfare of his people, he felt a more hearty pleasure than he had ever before known. His affairs, too, were in a thriving condition, and his estate was much relieved by the reduction of incumbrances. His hands were loosed, and he worked hard in active usefulness. In return for his first remittance of interest, he received the kindest letters from Mr. Schelling, and many suggestions to assist him in the practical parts of his improvements. Sometimes, he felt a conscience sting, when he

reflected on the condition his friend had annexed ; but it had never been claimed—possibly never would be. And, in the mean time, he was adding to, doubling, the well-being of all those about him. Surely he was, he thought, right. His mother never spoke on the subject of his connexion with Mr. Schelling. Once, when I introduced it, she told me she was astonished at Mr. Schelling's delay ; it was strange, she said, his having made so strict a condition, and yet not to have made any use of her son's consent to it ; and she feared that he was but waiting for a good opportunity to carry out his purpose. As time wore on, even Mrs. More became less fearful ; she began to allow that she might have done the Unitarian injustice, and the sight of all the good her son was effecting, blunted even her acute judgment. Besides, she was occupied with many thoughts of Catherine and Major Wyndham's happiness. It is time I should tell the reader somewhat about them. When first he heard of the sentence pronounced on him by Catherine's father, and Mrs. More, it was some moments before he could risk himself to inquire if it was to be a year of absolute exile, or whether he might see, and plead forgiveness from Catherine herself.

“ No ! ” said Mrs. More, who was Mr. Hyde's

deputy ; for he, wise man ! knew little of such matters — “ No ! ” said Mrs. More ; “ your regiment is quartered near. You are likely, I hope, to see us often here ; and Mr. Hyde has thought it better that there should be no restraint on your intercourse, as an acquaintance with his daughter. but he trusts to your honour, Major Wyndham,” she added, gravely and anxiously, “ that you will not take advantage of any past engagement in your manner to her.”

“ Past engagement ! ” repeated Major Wyndham, bitterly ; “ and for a moment’s fault, is our engagement to be broken off ? ”

“ A moment’s fault has caused Catherine many hours of suffering,” said Mrs. More.

“ Does she forgive me ? ” he asked, eagerly.

“ You must learn that from herself presently,” she answered good-naturedly.

After a long pause, Major Wyndham again addressed her, with a voice weak from contending pride and emotion.

“ You have taught me more than I ever thought of before,” he said ; “ you have led me towards the light ; this is a different atmosphere from the world ; one breathes a new life,” he continued. “ Will you guide me, will you help me to become

like you—will you make me worthy of Catherine?”

“My dear Major Wyndham, I can do but little; it is for yourself; to be watchful to guard against the evil influences which are at work on all sides.”

“I will spend every moment I can with you,” he exclaimed; “evil influences lose their power in your presence.”

“This is strange from you, Major Wyndham; you, a man of the world, speaking so, to a humble old woman.”

“You are the first to speak truth to me; you have shown me the depths of my nature; every one else seems material—ignorant, compared to you.”

“Do not exalt me,” she answered, smiling; “for, when you knew me better, you would see that I was nought, and your belief in goodness might suffer; but look to Truth itself—Truth, as it glimmers in all Creation, nay, shines in some creations; look through the dark shadows of visible created things, to the spirit meanings within. The senses are a veil before the soul; we see the veil, and think we are very wise, because we perceive its texture and colour; but the soul looks through and beyond it, to the clear

light, which is hidden from our senses. Learn and know these things, Major Wyndham."

"Under your tutelage," he added, earnestly.

"Under the tutelage of a higher power," she answered, reverently. There was a pause of some moments.

"I have your promise," she said at length, "that you will only be to Catherine as an ordinary acquaintance, until the year be over."

"Yes," he answered, dreamily; and then starting, he continued in his earnest manner, "It is a just punishment."

And true to their promises, he and Catherine, when they met were as strangers to each other, except sometimes when his earnest stedfast eye fixed itself on her, and her pulses fluttered under the glance. He was often at Cappagh, nearly always spending his Sundays there, and he had many conversations with my revered friend. I would that I could record some of them; but I have not space, and they might weary the reader.

And, by degrees, the same man whom I had first met in the fullness of his supercilious contempt, learned to accompany Mrs. More, an active assistant in her charities; and he who before, with scorn, called charity hypocrisy, and

treated the poor as savages, was now foremost in doing practical good.

At first, he vigorously began the change, as a sort of penance for his folly towards Lady Louisa Chetwode; but afterwards, to do good, became his habit and his pleasure. I need scarcely say Catherine's love for him grew with his growth in right, and strengthened with his strength. As for him, the more he learned to value virtue and goodness, the more he appreciated her in whom they shone so brightly. It was a wise step that Mrs. More and Mr. Hyde had taken to promote Catherine's welfare, for it was wise to give a year's education to Major Wyndham; it was wise not to drive him in his disappointment to the world's school, but to keep him, as they did, amongst themselves.

There are some, in this world of mistakes, who think that reformation of a man's character is a moment's work, and who imagine the excitement of half-an-hour's fanaticism a complete conversion. If such were true, how easy change would be—a single field-preaching would effect it; but it is a life-long work. To use again Mrs. More's simile—one must travel through the many shades which change night into day, before we can even approach the pure sunlight

of our perfect state ; and during the journey, we are in constant danger of turning away from the distant brightness, and plunging again into darkness.

Mrs. More earnestly pointed the way out to him ; he saw her footprints before him, and followed them.

So it was not an unhappy time, this year of delay, and it passed quickly over ;—as quick the time seemed to Major Wyndham, as his first sleep is to a fevered man. Christmas season came round ; and on Christmas eve we were assembled at Cappagh at breakfast, occupied in the pleasant work of reading letters and news, of the warm and comfortable hue which tinges all the affairs of life at that season.

“ A letter from Schelling !” exclaimed Cathal ; and his brow flushed for a moment.

Mrs. More looked very grave ; it seemed as if the frost had made its way through the well-closed windows, for every one seemed to feel a sudden chill.

“ He says he will look in upon us here, if we will give him a night’s lodging,” said Cathal ; “ he is coming from his estate in the county”—

“ Does he bring his son with him ?” asked Mrs. More.

“ I suppose so ; I believe they are quite inseparable companions,” he answered.

Neither Cathal nor his mother spoke more ; and breakfast was finished with an uncomfortable constraint. Immediately after, Cathal went to his study, as he said he had a great deal to do, and Major Wyndham, Mrs. More, and I, adjourned to the drawing room. She was silent and absent for some moments, but at last she said to him, “ You must wonder what made my son and me so suddenly grave.”

“ Something about this Mr. Schelling I perceive,” he replied.

She in a few words explained the matter, of which neither she nor her son had ever spoken to him before, and begged him to use his influence with Cathal.

“ I will, indeed,” he replied, earnestly ; “ for you seem certainly right.”

“ You used not to speak so,” I said, in some surprise.

“ Major Wyndham was then an advocate of so-called liberality,” said Mrs. More, looking affectionately at him ; “ he was not enlisted on the side of our church.”

He was silent for a moment. “ Do you

know," he said, "it looks like inconsistency—this change of mine."

"I think the law of consistency," answered Mrs. More, "has been invented by society, for its own convenience. I do not think, in truth, that consistency is praiseworthy, or inconsistency deserves blame; it is only when we adhere to right, that we do rightly."

"Why then is it so often made an excuse for wrong?" asked Major Wyndham.

"Because it is for the convenience of men to know each other's opinions, and so they have branded inconsistency, which may be a virtue, as shameful; we constantly meet these erroneous laws in society, because we look not beyond present convenience."

"But it is singular, its being so universal a rule, and so generally received."

"In human ideas and laws we may often trace a defaced likeness of some perfect truth; and in this yearning after consistency we may perceive a longing for that perfection, which is indeed consistent, because it is immutable."

"Do you think," said Major Wyndham, "that even our evil passions have their origin in good?"

"I am convinced," replied Mrs. More, "that sin has originated nothing, for the evil spirit has

no creative power ; he but turns and twists our original good into sin."

" You do not then believe that there are abstract principles of sin combating those of virtue, the spirit of avarice, for instance, fighting against that of charity."

" No ! I think there is no distinct abstraction of sin ; and, to quote your example, I imagine avarice to be but a malformation of the right instinct of self-love."

" But you, who so highly exalt self-love—who make it to consist of a right appreciation of things future as well as present—how can you make avarice of mere gold a part of that future-scanning principle ?"

" I said a diseased part ; avarice is, I think, the abortion of the love of wealth. Now love of wealth I hold to be in a certain measure blameless."

" Indeed !" he exclaimed, with an astonished air ; " and do you, who are an advocate for constant contemplation of what is beyond the world—do you think the pursuit of wealth, which will perish with us, right."

" Do not run away with the subject, my dear friend, and prepare yourself for a very startling observation of mine.—I think before every con-

sideration, religious, reasonable, or charitable, in the mind of man, exists the desire for all necessities of life ; for how could he be either of the three without them ?”

“ Granting that, desire for necessities is very different from love of wealth.”

“ Not so different as you imagine, because who shall define what are necessities ?”

“ Why, food and clothing.”

“ So we say when we are providing for paupers ; and yet we know there are many things besides, so desirable to us, that they become necessary to our well being. Love of wealth is the natural desire to supply these wants.”

“ But love of wealth produces so many evils.”

“ I am not speaking of what it produces ; of course, the moment it tempts us to commit any wrong action, it is to be blamed ; but I think pure love of wealth is a right instinct, for it is a mean to the great end, Perfection.”

“ Perfection is the ocean to the river of your thoughts.”

“ It should be the ocean to the river of all human tendencies,” said Mrs. More.

“ But what has the desire of earthly riches to say to a spiritualized perfection ?”

“ As much as any of the human instincts,

which all tend, I think, if rightly followed, to good ; in this love of wealth we see a materialized desire of advancement, an indefinite hankering after that state of quiet and joyful contemplation which we left at our fall. Money gives us, when rightly gained and rightly used, a measure of this quietness, though it be imperfect, and it provides us with time and the means for pursuing the great work of our lives. It is for these secret reasons that I think, unknown to ourselves, we follow so diligently, often without a defined object, the gain of wealth."

"But you condemn our cultivating those tastes which must perish with us ; surely the love of gold will be the first to go."

"Not the love of what wealth can do. It is not like time and space, a slang of mortality ; the notions of value belong to every phase of our being, unless its present powers be entirely overturned. Gold is made their imperfect representative on earth, but though it will perish, they will not ; money is, I think, when rightly used, a type of our future wealth."

"Then you think our hankering after money in this state, is a shadow of our innate desire for perfection in a future."

"Yes ! for wealth is to men, if rightly used,

an immediate benefit, though it is unsatisfying in itself, because it is only a stepping-stone to a higher good."

"But can it lead to a higher good?"

"When rightly employed, I think so; for it frees us from a great part of the curse of labour—it enables us to cultivate our imagination and the powers of our mind; and it is, besides, a lever of doing good. Oh yes! wealth, I think, is desirable, legitimately so, as a mean to the end of our improvement."

"Then would you say that every taste and wish of ours is in reference to perfection?"

"I do, though it seems often otherwise; and this I think also is the great division between us and the lower animals. It is not reason that separates us so completely from them; it is this tendency of all our powers to return to a higher state from whence we have fallen."

"Well! we have strayed far from our original conversation," said Major Wyndham. "I think from what your son says, that Mr. Schelling will be here about Thursday or Friday."

"And what do you think of Cathal's entanglement with him?"

"It is a pity, as Mr. Schelling seems a violent Unitarian; but perhaps he is really a gentleman

and a man of honour, and may not press the point."

"You agree with me then in thinking my son is mistaken."

"Your teaching," he answered affectionately, "has shown me that he is ; if I have any influence over him, I will try and avert the mischief you fear."

What could Major Wyndham do against the clever, unscrupulous Unitarian ? little indeed, as Mrs. More feared ; and yet she was grateful to him, and she appreciated his straight-forward English character, cleared and improved as it had been during the past year.

CHAPTER XIII.

MR. SCHELLING and his son arrived on the following Friday. I was asked to meet them ; but Major Wyndham was obliged to be absent on some regimental duties during the whole of their visit, as he was the officer in charge of the regiment at ———. The travellers were late, and Cathal went to the hall-door often to listen for their carriage wheels, with an impatience unusual in him. He was irritable and gloomy, too, and seemed disinclined to join in our conversation, so it was rather a relief when his guests did come. Mr. Schelling entered with a frank, winning smile on his handsome features. Rupert looked graver, more delicate than when I had seen him the winter before.

“I fear we have detained you, my dear Madam,” said his father ; “the roads are heavier than I calculated.”

It was not the time for mistrust. The candles shone brightly, the fire sprang up with joyous flames ; comfort removes suspicion, and Unit-

rianism was forgotten in the crowd of pleasant subjects of conversation which Mr. Schelling introduced. Cathal looked almost triumphantly at his mother ; he, too, took a forward place in the gay discussions, and his dark grey eyes gleamed with excitement, while he stretched his mind along side of Mr. Schelling's.

"Your son travelled to learn," I said, in a low tone, to Mrs. More, as Cathal was entertaining us by his clever account of some scientific experiments he had seen tried in Paris.

"How is it, More, you never say a word of all these things to me?" I asked ; "it was selfish of you to keep it all for Mr. Schelling."

"The flint requires the steel," he answered.

"Which personates the flint?"

"Not I, certainly!" exclaimed Mr. Schelling.

Rupert gave a slight start, a kind of involuntary dissent. Mrs. More noticed it, and looked at me significantly. I guessed her meaning ; and observing earnestly his pale countenance, I saw in it painful signs of the mind's conflict within ; his brow was slightly knit, and his lips were pressed together, in the manner of one who is strongly determined. He spoke little, and his absent look showed a mind far away, and in a very different sphere from our gay dinner table.

His father, I observed, often looked at him with a dissatisfied and uneasy air—not the uneasiness of alarmed affection, but with the suspicious surveillance of one who fears to lose a prisoner.

I said something of Cathal's extraordinary spirits to Mrs. More.

"He always enjoys Mr. Schelling's society," she replied, with a faint smile; and she added, in a low voice—"Is it not singular how he has gained this influence over my son?"

In a few moments after, she left the dining-room.

"Well, More," said Mr. Schelling, when she had gone, "I cannot stay with you now for more than a day; you must forgive, therefore, my being so unsociable as to ask your attention for some matters of business."

"Certainly."

"You have done what you intended? I hope you found everything satisfactory in the arrangements between us?"

"Yes."

"I assure you I did my best to make all convenient for you, for I really valued your friendship, and I made some sacrifices to assist you; now you must help me in your turn, and fulfil our joint compact."—I and Rupert were sitting at

the other side of the fire-place, so Mr. Schelling and Cathal spoke as if they had been *tête-à-tête*. "You have no hesitation, have you?" he continued.

Cathal was silent.

"Let there be then a cancelling of our agreement, on both sides," said Mr. Schelling. "You can return me the money, and we will say no more about it, though I shall always be glad that we have become acquainted with each other."

I pitied Cathal, for I knew that it was utterly impossible for him, at that time, to borrow the twenty thousand pounds. There was no money to be had at any terms, for Irishmen—and Mr. Schelling was not ignorant of this; he had calculated the tightness of the money-market—and Cathal was completely in his power.

At last, making a violent effort over himself—conquering conscience—he said,—

"I have made the agreement, and I will adhere to it. You shall have the ground."

"I will not take it in that way; you must give it to me without grudging," said Mr. Schelling, sternly.

"I do freely give it to you," said Cathal, with a faint smile.

“ We will go and settle about the site to-morrow, then.”

“ Any time you like.”

“ You must assist me in seeing the contracts performed by the masons and workmen.”

Cathal was silent.

“ Now, More,” said his guest, “ you acknowledge that I have done you service ; in return, you have passed me your word that you will give me your countenance in establishing a chapel for the believers in my creed. Will you, or will you not ? You see, I still give you the choice.”

“ I will,” said Cathal, almost inaudibly.

“ That is right,” said Mr. Schelling, resuming his pleasant, courteous manner. “ I am going to build a really handsome piece of architecture, and we will study to-morrow what site and plan will look best in the park.”

An ornamental Unitarian chapel ! I did not wonder at the deep gloom which overspread Cathal’s countenance, nor at his silence and reserve, in spite of his guest’s entertaining conversation. His mother—how would she bear it ? Bitter thoughts came into his mind, as he reflected on the power Mr. Schelling had attained over him. He felt his manner now almost in-

sulting, and his very kindness served to remind him that he was no longer his own master.

“Oh that I had never accepted his money on such terms,” he muttered to himself, as he walked slowly across the wide hall to the room where his mother sat; but his annoyance was, however, chiefly caused by the sensation, so galling to his proud nature, that Mr. Schelling had acquired a mastery over him, and it did not proceed from a clear certainty that his act was wrong in itself. When he first gave his consent, he had let himself almost voluntarily be blinded by sophistries, and he had had neither courage nor energy enough, since, to think deeply on the subject. Mr. Schelling knew this—he knew it would not be difficult by persuasion to gain all he needed; but private reasons made him wish to give pain; he determined to lead his captive in chains, and he allowed Cathal to feel their first cold touch, as I have described. It would not, however, do to gall him too deeply, for he might break out of them—he might gather strength from suffering, and ruin Mr. Schelling’s yet incomplete scheme—and so for the rest of the evening he exerted himself again to please Cathal; he entered warmly into all his philanthropic plans, and gave him the assistance of his clever practical head, opening to him

such a vista of useful improvements which he was to bring about, that he again nearly restored him to his self-complacency. Nearly—but not quite. From that day, Cathal's eyes were opened to the fetters upon him, though they were handsomely gilded. From that day, he at times suffered acutely, and the happiness of his life was tarnished ; but he could not go back then ; he had no means of cancelling his debt, and he felt that he must perform the conditions on his side ; there was nothing for it, he thought, but to deaden conscience, to pour the oil of false reasoning on its troubled waters ; and Mr. Schelling became more than ever his guide, for Cathal could not bear to appeal to his own conscience and to his own rules of conduct—they reproached him too painfully ; and, with the trust of a generous, true mind, he believed in his professions of friendship : he doubted not his sincerity, and he tried all the more earnestly to be guided by him, and to be persuaded by his arguments, that he had lost the support of that staff of life, his own single-hearted purpose of doing right, come what may.

The morning after the arrival of his guests, Cathal, and the elder Mr. Schelling went out soon after breakfast, to look for a site for the new chapel, carrying with them many plans

and estimates, which were to guide them in their arrangements. He had not had courage to speak to his mother on the subject ; but, with an embarrassed look, he told her he should be out most of the day.

She easily guessed their purpose ; and, though she seldom showed external emotion, the paleness of her face, and the tremulousness of her hand, when she tried to begin her morning occupations, showed how she felt. I said nothing—for who could interfere with such sorrow as hers ? Rupert looked also very grave, and concerned ; and from some words I had casually heard exchanged between him and his father, as they came down to breakfast, and the almost savage glance which Mr. Schelling at the same time cast upon him—I guessed that he had ventured to remonstrate against introducing a religion into the neighbourhood, which was evidently so repugnant to Mrs. More.

There was an awkward silence for some moments among us ; but at last it was broken by Rupert's addressing Mrs. More, in the low earnest voice, which was so great a charm of his.

“ You do not wish my father to establish his chapel here, do you dear Mrs. More ? ”

“ I am grieved that my son should not have

more strictly followed the teaching of his church," she replied, stooping her head, that we might not observe how her lips quivered with emotion.

Rupert was silent for a moment, but again he said, "I am sorry we ever came across your path."

"Do not be sorry for any event," she replied; "for unforeseen circumstances are ordained by a higher power. I regret that Cathal should have yielded, but not that I knew you."

"If you knew," he replied, "how your teachings and words have echoed within me, since I saw you—how much I owe you—you would acknowledge that it is not in selfishness that I regret our having visited your house; but you must hate us," he continued.

"I will confess to you," she answered, "I have been much pained since then, dear Rupert, and perhaps Cathal's failing in what is—for I know it is—his duty, may have been caused by your father. You see I speak frankly; but we little know what events are truly desirable, and it may be, that that visit was a blessing to me and to my son."

"I thank God, if you reaped any benefit through my means!" he exclaimed. "I feared you would have been angry," he said, "and rightly

so, at the unfortunate results of that visit. I do not agree with my father ; I do not think this unscrupulous advancement of even the purest creed is right." He spoke excitedly ; but she answered calmly—

"The advancement of our creed, even when we are certain of its perfection, could never excuse any act which in the smallest degree infringes on our duty to ourselves ; but we will not speak of your father—parents should be almost sacred subjects to their children."

Rupert said nothing, and an expression of gloom passed over his countenance.

"Speak of yourself, dear Rupert," said Mrs. More, kindly ; for she had before noticed his almost childish sensitiveness to the gentlest rebuke.

"The interdict was taken off my study of controversy," he continued, after a pause, "last June ; and, from what I told you last winter, you can imagine how eagerly I plunged into it."

"And were you satisfied by it?"

"No ! on every side there met me men ; their opinions, their squabbles, their attacks on, and destruction of truth, when it dared to oppose their self-invented systems. Controversy seems but a bitter fruit of ignorance and falsehood. You had put me on a better track ; I felt but going

farther and farther from this, as I lost my way in human disputes, arising from human error."

"I agree with you," said Mrs. More; "I have ever found controversy an unsatisfactory study; for, though it affects to treat of truth, it is really but a quarrelling of men, about their own mistakes."

"I always found my right apprehension of things endangered," answered Rupert, "even by the most orthodox controversialists; for the arguments they professed to answer, seemed to me, often strengthened by their alleged disproof."

"I do not wonder at that," said Mrs. More; "writers on your side must have a difficult task; but," she continued, "do not let us enter on controversy, since we both dislike it; I would rather we spoke together of what all mankind must acknowledge—general truths, which will, in time, perhaps, lead you to Christianity—without entering into men's assertions or denials."

"I have read many different plans and systems of religion," he said; "but they seem to me, to fall short of what I desire. I will acknowledge to you, that I am not content with my father's creed; I have not forsaken it, and yet it is not satisfactory to me, and no system that I can find among men is!"

“Probably not,” replied Mrs. More ; “for truth cannot be systematized by man—it is too immense for him—and much of it must be a mystery to him, for he cannot attain to its comprehension. Men put together very neat systems, formed out of scraps of the truth, that satisfy the rules of logic ; and these nicely planned machines satisfy their reasons and their intellects—but such religion will never content the whole spirit ; for though sense cannot take it in, yet our higher powers can never be satisfied with less than infiniteness. We cannot by our nature be happy, short of the presence of the true God ; and no system which man’s reason can frame, could contain Him. Any creed, of which every article is defined by our defective reason, is to the truth, what an orrery is to the universe.”

“But, my dear Madam,” I could not avoid saying, for I thought I spied an inconsistency ; “I thought you were an advocate for using reason in religion.”

“Do you not see,” she exclaimed, “that every gift which we possess, is a mean necessary to our religion ; for the end of created man is religion, and no part of him is useless to that end. Reason is like the others necessary ; for unless we were given reason, how could we per-

ceive the truth of those things of which we have spoken? and without intellect, we could not know the need of imagination and faith."

"Yes!" said Rupert, who appeared to have been thinking much while Mrs. More spoke; "yes, it is impossible, but, that to man in his present state, there should be mysteries in truth—we see them shadowing beyond the boundaries of our powers. But yet I have been taught to consider, that whatever cannot be dissected by reason, is not to be received by men."

"It itself points out its own deficiency," answered Mrs. More; "for there are many facts universally received, which yet cannot be proved by reason, as we at present imperfectly possess it; and the existence of principles beyond its ken, is plain to all men. This supernatural ground we are admitted to by revelation—after, mark you, through reason, we knew that such *terra incognita* existed. From many proofs addressed to it also, we discover the authority of this revelation; is it not then, apart from all other considerations, unreasonable in us to disbelieve one jot in it from its most simple narrative, to its most supernatural announcement?"

Rupert was silent; her words were very

different from the teachings his father had bestowed upon him.

“I wish,” he said at length, “I wish you were ever with me, to set these things so clearly before me.”

“No !” she answered ; “ the responsibility of a right choice rests with you, dear Rupert. In your study of such subjects, you must remember only to forget, the bye-laws of human reasoning. Do not be offended with its name ; but of all creeds, you will find Catholicity, alone, rests not in man, for it is not invented by man ; it is received from God, and leads his creatures back to him.”

“Not yet,” said Rupert, with a startled look ; “there is much in my father’s belief which I do not yet perhaps understand ; it may satisfy me. Do not, dear Mrs. More, tell him what I said about its seeming insufficient to me ; after all, it may be from my not rightly receiving it.”

“Study still more then ; but I ask you to remember my advice.”

“How could I forget it ?” he exclaimed ; “how I wish that we belonged to the same faith, and then I could, without restraint, receive your advice ; but I am forced to submit it to the

gauge of our creed, before I can freely follow it."

A pause ensued, when I, to break its unpleasantness, remarked, "You rather surprised me, my dear Madam, by saying that we had need of imagination, as well as faith. Faith, of course, is necessary; but what is imagination, but a power of dreaming ingeniously?" I found that, on this point, what I thought my plain common sense, had two antagonists; for Rupert exclaimed,

"Why, imagination is the glass in which we see heaven reflected!"

"That is all very fine," said I, "for poets and those who know how to look into your magic mirror; but I ask again, what is the need of imagination to common mortals?"

"Greater than we are in the habit of supposing," answered Mrs. More; "for man would be as a brute without it."

"I thought, in my ignorance," said I, "that it was by the gift of reason, that we are superior to the brute creation."

"Reason would be but little superior to instinct, if it were not allied to imagination. I believe, Doctor, that man is distinguished from inferior animals, chiefly by his innate desire

to prepare himself for that perfect future state, which he feels is before him. This desire for perfection it is, I think, which elevates our instinct to reason and wisdom ; and our selfishness, to self-love. Now imagination, I think, enables us to believe in this future perfection, and so it applies the touch of this never-failing divine attraction to all our instincts, changing them into heavenly aspirations."

"Faith," I said, "is good for this purpose ; but I think you give imagination too high a place."

"There can be no faith without imagination, for we must imagine the fact before we can believe."

"But if we believed all we imagined, what a sea of myths and follies we should be lost in !"

"I think you confuse imagination with fancy," she replied ; "imagination I understand to be the power of presenting to our mind's eye abstract truth which exists, but which we cannot know by experience, because it is beyond our present powers to discover. Imagination is, in short, the speculum on which is mirrored all specially revealed and supernatural truth, which faith then adopts."

"And what is fancy ?"

“Fancy is a combination of human ideas—a kaleidoscope of experienced facts—mixed up with some gaudy scraps of sensuous colour, often nicely arranged, and forming pretty pictures. The great difference between fancy and imagination is, that imagination sets before us truth, and is the reflection of Heaven ; while fancy presents pictures gleaned by our senses, from among the scenes of earth.”

“Yet we say that the most sensuous poets have imagination.—Shelley, for instance.”

“We say—but we often say sad nonsense—Shelley is peculiarly a poet of fancy. Wordsworth has the imagination of which I speak, and Tennyson.”

“Why, some of his best poems are metaphysical and philosophical.”

“And that just accounts for their being imaginative—for philosophy is the chief sphere of imagination.”

I could not help exclaiming—“My dear madam, what do you mean?”

“Why, if imagination be ever needed, it is by a philosopher—for a *primâ facie* view of principles which his reason presents to him, can never, I think, be in truth correct.”

“In the name of offended reason, why not?”

“Because we cannot see the whole bearings of any truth by the observation of our reason, until, by imagination, we come out of ourselves, and place ourselves in the centre of things.”

“I do not understand.”

“I will try to explain my meaning by a metaphor.—Suppose we were living in a valley with a mountain towering above us, we could not tell the bearings of the whole country around until we climbed to the highest point, and then, on every side, we should see how it rose out of the plain. Now the view, which we get from the valley, of the mountain, represents the relative view which by reason we may get of truth ; we see it on the side which is towards us ; but yet we know little, nothing, of all its other bearings. Now, by imagination, the philosopher elevates himself from his present condition, until he sees the whole truth as it absolutely exists, and not merely as it relates to himself.”

“I understand you better now ; so then you make imagination necessary to our perception of all abstract truth.”

“I think reason may discover relative, subjective truth ; but I do think imagination is necessary to our perception of objective truth.”

“Then you, indeed, give it a high place,”

I said. "I do not think philosophers recognise it, however, so much as you do for them."

"Why, men generally think that they themselves are the centre of things, and they judge principles and truths under the influence of this mistake, thereby often coming to false conclusions, and, by their one-sided personal views, introducing all manner of error."

We were all silent for a few moments. Mrs. More's conversation often required a pause for reflection, different from that of most people, which only keeps alive attention by its unceasingness. She broke our reverie, by saying—

"I promised to give a receipt for making pea-bread to old Alice Keenan; but the first ingredient in cooking is the thing to be cooked, so I must take her half a stone of the meal. Will you help me to carry the basket?"

We readily assented, and in a few minutes we were on our way.

When we had walked some moments in silence, Rupert asked if the projected terrace had been finished.

"Yes!" Mrs. More replied, "it was completed last spring; we will go and see it, after we have instructed Alice in the mysteries of pea-meal."

As we passed the gate, we saw, near it, Cathal and Mr. Schelling, giving orders to a labourer,

who was cutting a line in the sod,—lock-spitting,—as we call it in rustic parlance. Mrs. More looked for a moment a little paler than usual, but she commanded herself, and walked towards them.

Mr. Schelling advanced to meet her; there was the slightest possible expression of triumph in his manner, which was, however, as courteous as ever.

“I am glad,” said he, “you have come to help us in our work. I remember some very refined and, doubtless, right ideas, which you expressed last winter on architecture.”

“I know little of such matters,” she replied; and added with emphasis, “in any case, I could not offer you any assistance!”

“Do you not then appreciate my desire to promote religion?” he said with an air of disappointment.

“We shall not agree on such questions,” she replied, almost haughtily. “I did not know that you were engaged in this place; but, as I have met you, Cathal,” she continued, addressing her son, “I wish to remind you that you promised this ground to old Dick Martin for his new cottage.”

“I have given land to him elsewhere,” he re-

plied, but in a reckless tone of voice, so unusual with him, that I turned to see how he looked. The forced smile, so discordant with the gloomy expression of his brow and eyes, and the nervous twitching of his mouth, belied his careless manner. He saw his mother's pained look and his strong affection for her suffered ; but pride forced him to conceal what he felt, at any cost, for it is a strange instinct in men, that however much they may dislike an act, if they be forced into it, they always make-believe its performance is agreeable to them."

Mrs. More said no more, but turned again to pursue her walk. Rupert whispered something in a low voice to his father. I heard his answer ; it was an example of the species of influence he possessed over the young man. The only influence, as he knew well, which has strong power over a mind like his son's.

"Trust me !" he said ; "I am acting from the purest motives ; they will one day be made clear to you."

And this, I thought, is what makes Rupert so averse to his father's teaching ; he believes in his sincerity ; he thinks he is devoted to right.

CHAPTER XIV.

WHEN we returned for luncheon, after visiting Alice Keenan, we found Mr. Schelling and Cathal in the dining-room.

“ I have been very selfish, mother,” he said, “ but I must not monopolize Schelling any more ; he wants to walk with you, to see the terrace he planned during his last visit.”

Though he tried to assume an unconcerned, gay air, it was evident how ill at ease he really was. His mother, however, exerted herself to avoid any embarrassing pause, for she felt no pique, no annoyance, that her son had acted contrary to her wishes ; her sorrow for his error seemed rather to make him more dear to her—more anxious to please him, in what she could, if possible, than before.

He and Rupert went to look at the stables and kennel, but I joined Mrs. More and Mr. Schelling.

He tried several times to introduce subjects of a religious cast into their conversation,—for he was

evidently anxious to gain his companion's good opinion,—and to do so, he exerted all his cleverness to rise to her standard; but she always avoided what are called “serious topics,”—and especially so in her intercourse with Mr. Schelling. Nor did she feel inclined to debate with him, the best site for the building of his chapel.

At last, he saw that she was not to be led into discussion, and he began to praise the taste with which she had completed the pleasure-grounds adjoining the new terrace. “The only improvement I could imagine in this view,” he said, “would be an additional picturesqueness. The trees are too well grown; I should like to see some gnarled trunks. A few lightning strokes would improve them.”

“I can hardly expect many to agree with me,” replied Mrs. More; “but I think our love for what are called picturesque objects, is a perversion of our natural instinct for the beautiful.”

“Then do you not admire the many eccentricities of nature—that beautiful scarlet laurel-leaf, for instance, diseased though naturalists might call it?”

“Hardly, for that is an imperfection.”

Mr. Schelling looked puzzled; he was unaccustomed to such severe rules of beauty, and he

dropped the subject, fearful lest he might, out of his depth, plunge in a wrong direction, and increase the prejudice against him in Mrs. More's mind. While he was meditating on what subject he and she might meet on equal grounds, Cathal and Rupert, accompanying Agnes and Catherine Hyde, appeared within sight, and by their coming, relieved him from his perplexity.

Catherine Hyde had grown quieter and graver than when my readers first knew her. Forethoughts of life and its duties had checked her former high spirits; for thoughtfulness and graveness, even in the most blameless, must ever go hand in hand. When, by thought, we see farther into the truths of our being than the mere every-day events around us, we can scarce be utterly light-hearted. It belongs to a perfect state to enjoy the Infinite; in our present condition, it weighs upon us.

It may seem strange that a young mind, and a girl's mind, should think so deeply; but Mrs. More had ever encouraged her to do so. She knew how insufficient is the narrowness of what is called "a good English education"—how unsatisfying is the religion which is not based on a knowledge of the great truths of our being. As far as she could, she set them before her pupils,

teaching them rather to devote themselves to the study of principles, than to that of mere facts.

Agnes Hyde had sooner learnt these lessons ; for her temperament was more suited to them—at least, until the pain Major Wyndham's conduct had given Catherine, had made a “ convenient season,” and had checked her former almost exuberant gaiety.

And yet, though more resembling her sister than formerly, she was still a very different character—perhaps more loveable, to most tastes. She gathered personal joy from every pleasure—she entirely adopted the happiness which fell to her lot as her own, and sunned herself in it with the delight of a butterfly, as it opens its wings on a bright day. And so her look was more joyous, her step more gay, her laugh more frequent than her sister's, though their circumstances were, to all appearance, equal. — Why was this ? Because Agnes made an offering of her joy to its Giver—because her happiness, all her many blessings, were returned in a sacrifice of thanksgiving. She did not adopt her pleasures as her own irresponsible possession ; therefore she did not revel in the sunshine of life as though it were created solely for her, and as Catherine did. Her mere pleasure was perhaps

lessened by this sense of responsibility ; she was more earnest than her sister, but her happiness was greater.

But, as I have said, Catherine had become much more thoughtful during the six months of her engagement ; and it was without her former inclination to laugh at him for his melancholy air, that she walked beside Rupert Schelling, to meet us on the terrace.

During their former visit, she had showed me many a caricature of his pale, sad face, but now she felt interested in his darkened views of life, for she had in the past year some of its turmoil and care ; she now knew more of the meaning of Longfellow's line, which, the winter before, she had quoted to Major Wyndham—

“ Life is real, life is earnest.”

“ I am glad you have come, for it has saved my sending a messenger to the rectory,” said Mrs. More to the two young ladies ; “ you must stay and dine with us. Do you think your father would join our party ?”

“ We will return and ask him, if you like,” answered Agnes Hyde.

“ Shall we all walk in that direction ?” said Cathal. “ Should you like it, mother ?”

“ Certainly, if you wish,” she replied.

“Do you know our rector, Schelling?” Cathal asked.

“I have not the honour,” he replied, while a curious gleam lighted his eyes—a mixture of triumph and dislike.

“What new improvement are you setting on foot, Mr. More,” asked Catherine Hyde; “we saw some labourers marking out what looked like a plan, as we came up.”

It was an embarrassing question; but, while Cathal was confusedly hesitating what to say, Mr. Schelling answered for him, with a slight smile—

“I have been persuading my friend to exercise his architectural tastes on that piece of ground. What the uses of the building will be, I believe he will keep for a surprise.”

Cathal coloured, and looked angry; but what could he say to Mr. Hyde’s daughters, to Agnes especially? His mother did not speak, as he seemed to wish concealment, though her first impulse prompted her to have none. She looked pained at the power which, by this speech, she saw Mr. Schelling possessed over her son; for if he were, as formerly, unshackled, she knew that he would not have let it remain unanswered.

Agnes Hyde seemed astonished, but she said

nothing ; however, Catherine rather thoughtlessly exclaimed, " I am sure it will be something to admire ; papa says all your late improvements, Mr. More, are so well planned."

" Do not say more now," said his mother, in a low voice, for she saw a red spot enlarging on her son's brow ; " your father knows what it is ; he will tell you about it."

" I received such a curious letter from that strange Mrs. Parks," said Catherine, after a pause of some moments ; " she wrote from Rome, where they are spending the winter."

" You must let us read it," answered Cathal, quickly, for he was glad to change the subject. " Wyndham must see it, too."

" I will not make it quite public," she replied, colouring ; for her would-be friend had made some disagreeable remarks on the subject of her postponed engagement.

" Has her mother gone with them ?" inquired Mrs. More.

" Oh yes ! before they had been three weeks married, she joined them, and she has not since left them."

" Why he had a mother who never left him ; how have they managed ?" asked Cathal.

" Mrs. Peter completely dismissed her from

the establishment, and obliged her to retire on her jointure, which was not a large one ; but Mrs. Peter preached so incessantly, on the error of an old lady not devoting her thoughts solely to the “one thing needful,” that, out of sheer shame, she gave up his affairs to her son. Mrs. Peter at once took the management, for Mr. Parks has no will of his own, as the least arguing brings on his giddiness.”

“But how have you discovered all these things?” said Mrs. More, with a look of kind reproof to Catherine, for so ridiculing her correspondent.

“Mrs. Parks makes no secret of them,” she replied ; “and now that she thinks it cannot injure her fortunes, she writes with open ridicule of her mother, and the utmost contempt of her husband.”

“One could make many wise reflections on the evils her bad education has caused,” said Mrs. More ; “only it is uncharitable to moralize over personal examples.”

“But do you know her chief ground for scorning her husband?” said Catherine ; “she says in this letter that ‘he does not rise to her tone of mind,’ and that ‘he never originates an idea.’ ”

“Better than originating bad ones, however,” said Cathal.

“Then she insinuates that he is a f—l, as she has written it.”

“Of which the chief evidence was his marriage,” replied Cathal.

“Those kind of marriages generally end miserably,” observed Mrs. More.

“And yet she has got money—all she wanted,” replied Cathal.

“Just so—we desire money, and perhaps not wrongly; yet, like all means to perfection, if not rightly used, it is a misfortune.”

“I hear your favourite word perfection, Madam,” said Mr. Schelling.

“I wish,” she said, “it were always my ruling thought.”

Cathal abruptly changed the subject, for he dreaded any discussions involving moral questions, between his mother and Mr. Schelling, while he was present. It is a good test of whether our consciences are easy or not, our liking to hear right and wrong debated.

At the Rectory we found Mr. Hyde to whom Mr. Schelling was duly introduced. He had before heard of him, and he had been curious to make his acquaintance, as a clever man will

always be to test the prowess of his mental antagonist.

They were great contrasts, these two men—Mr. Hyde, with his high, slightly bald forehead, his clear bright eye, the grey of which looked black under his somewhat bushy eyebrows—his firmly set mouth, well shaped, though too massive for beauty, and his tall, strong figure, dressed in rough black frieze—and Mr. Schelling, small, and very thin and worn-looking, with beautiful, regular features. Yet the paleness of his face and the smallness of his keen blue eyes injured its expression. His mouth was generally curled by a smile, but the deep line from his nostril to his mouth showed that it was not the expression of a kindly feeling. He was always scrupulously neat and exact in his dress, on which I never observed a speck of mud, or dust. His hands were white, and his fingers well shaped, and tapering to their arched nails. As is usual among those who possess beauty of form, his actions were singularly graceful ; and I often envied him the total absence of *gaucherie* with which he noiselessly moved through the crowded china and frail ornaments in Mrs. More's morning room, for even on the Turkey carpet in the dining room my boots are always perversely audible.

I may be prejudiced, or have a coarse taste ; but I like a hearty noise. I like people to make their presence known, otherwise than by the indefinite and slightly awful sensation our spirits undergo when others are near them, until their eyes or ears perceive that some mortal is at hand.

Mr. Hyde readily promised to dine at Cap-pagh, for he was curious to know more of Mr. Schelling.

“ I have certainly heard the name, many years ago,” he said to me, “ and I think, in some way connected with my old friend, Cathal’s father, before his marriage ; but I remember nothing distinctly.”

I had been trying to make somewhat of an interesting story out of these simple facts, and I had intended to have left unmentioned the fact of Agnes’ growing affection for Cathal, until it might have come in with, perhaps, more interest, and been a surprise to the reader ; but I try in vain, and simple truth is all that I can describe. I would that I could write the whole truth of my friends ; the almost perfected character of Mrs. More, the many excellencies of the Hydes, and the unhappy contrast to them in Mr. Schelling. I can only tell a part of all this, and but badly

weave the little I do write into a story. Good reader, forgive my want of ingenuity. I say what I know, as I knew it myself; and it was during this spring that I first perceived the young plant of Cathal and Agnes' mutual love. It was deep-rooted before they themselves knew aught of it; and not for long after, was it acknowledged by one to the other. Yet the germ of it began to shoot in this winter of 1845-6.

Reader, you are perhaps angry with Cathal More, and think him unworthy of so white a lily as Agnes. You have seen prominently his chief fault, and I have scarcely mentioned his many excellencies. I will not number them—they were so many, that their recital might weary you; yet believe in them, that you may think the growing affection in Agnes for him not irreconcilable with her clear judgment and high standard of right. She saw him as a son, the “crown of his mother,”—as a friend, the unwearied helper of her father in all his works.

But why multiply causes for her love? she never reasoned on his merits; and the very admiration she felt for him was to her a veil, which hid from her, her deeper feelings. When she looked within herself, she saw respect for his goodness; underneath, though then unknown to

her, was love for himself, unperceivedly tincturing her whole being.

I guessed the secret, from a slight accident that Cathal met with one day, early in the month of December. We were watching him as he "schooled" an awkward young horse over some railing in the park. The animal fell across it, fortunately, however, flinging its rider clear of it. He was not hurt, but I felt Agnes' arm, which was drawn within mine, tremble excessively, while she became suddenly pale. I said—

"I did not know you were so nervous."

"I am not generally so," she replied, simply ; "I suppose on some days one is not so strong as on others."

She knew nothing about herself ! It was not some days, but some people that made the difference ; but unversed in novel lore, she was not on the look out for "sensations," nor had Miss Peter, or Mrs. Parks, as I should now call her, increased her knowledge, by her MS. "Burning words of broken hearts."

But, as I said, I should not have yet touched on this matter—for it was then unknown to all, even to Agnes herself, though she felt unmistakably glad to walk up the long avenue, leaning on Cathal, and to spend the long winter evening in his and his mother's society.

CHAPTER XV.

THERE was a sensation of embarrassment over the chief speakers of our little party, which cast a chill on their usually ready conversational powers. I speak of Mrs. More and Mr. Schelling ; for Mr. Hyde, though possessing the foundation of fluency—accurate knowledge—seldom spoke for what is called the sake of conversation. When an idea came forcibly across him, it struck words out of him, almost involuntarily ; but even when paying a morning visit, he would often sit silent and abstracted, only answering, by an indifferent monosyllable, any trivial remarks, addressed to him on the weather, or his neighbours.

Yet I have heard him, in the cabins of the poor, eagerly and eloquently speaking ; while, among the richer and religiously careless members of his flock, he was accused of chilling reserve and indifference. He *was* indifferent, but it was to their pursuits ; he was silent, because they were indifferent to his ; and he cared not to drag down his thoughts to the level of theirs. He held that

we should ever look above, and strive to go upward, and never, for any reason, allow one of our powers to turn earthwards ; not for the best friend's sake, not even to save a soul, would he stint in his heavenward course ; far less to bring down the mysteries of Heaven, and parade them in a lowered form among the grovellers of the world, even with the intention of convincing them that their reality existed above. I have often heard him speak with sorrow of those who, in a mistaken zeal for doing good, stooped to earth, that they might lift their fellows from it. "Never descend," he taught, "or we lose the heavenly clue. Never look back—remember Lot's wife. Arise, let us go hence," was his continual impulse ; "check not in our race, that others may come up with us ; they have Moses and the prophets. They have reason and revelation ; lose not your prize for any one." "This is not selfish," he said ; "it is a duty ; for we assist those behind us far more by our unflinching steadiness, than by turning back to tell them of our imperfect knowledge."

But I must return to earth—to imperfection and sin—to sense and mortality, our prison cells. There was not much said during our walk ; twilight has always a silencing influence on us ; perhaps from an undefined sorrow for light. The

blazing fire in Cathal's study, round which we collected, as was the family custom before dinner, somewhat revived our spirits. It is strange how fire-light and lamp-light, and all the invented lights of men, inspire feelings of greater self-gratulation, and self-satisfaction, than the appointed lights of the Universe ; we feel our senses expand—we become gay—our spirits rise—at night, because we are weighed down by the brightness of day, for it is a continual contrast to our darkened lives. I have often noticed this distinction between us and the rest of creation.—Most animals dislike our invented lights, for they are as God made them, pure ; we are depressed by the day, and we grow elated in the sullied brightness of our own fabrication, because we are also sullied.

Perhaps, I am too fond of searching for such correspondences ; I should simply have said that we all became comfortable in the fire-light.

“ Have you ever thought since, of the conversations on animal magnetism, that we had last year ? ” asked Mr. Schelling of Cathal.

“ They were too interesting to forget,” he answered. “ I am glad I did not consent to your wish of trying experiments on me, however.”

“ We heard a painful story of its effects since,” said Mrs. More.

“Accidents only happen when the mesmerist is nervous,” said Mr. Schelling; “but as you seem nervous too, More, perhaps it was as well not.”

He spoke in a sneering tone, which brought a flush of anger into Cathal’s cheek.

“I have no fear of your mesmeric power,” he answered; “or of any human power,” he added, with emphasis.

Mr. Schelling, who at first had scanned Cathal’s countenance with a look of disguised contempt, said nothing in reply, for his strongest hold over the young man’s mind was in his principle of honour, and gratitude for his supposed kindness, which would keep him to his promise to himself, and he feared to loosen the tie before his plans were ripe.

“I do not experimentalize now in that way much,” he continued; “but it has not prevented my still holding firmly the theory of animal magnetism, which we discussed last winter.”

“And that was, as well as I remember,” said Mrs. More, “that there was a proven connexion between mind and matter,—that none knew exactly in what this connexion existed, but that you solved the problem, by imputing it to a third existence in us, besides our souls and bodies, the workings of which you called animal magnetism.”

“There must have been something of truth in my idea, or it would not have remained so distinctly graven on your memory,” he answered courteously. “That was, and is, my theory ; and I think it fills a singular gap, which every thinking mind must perceive to exist in the chain of causation.”

“Do you mean the agencies which connect the will of the spirit with sensible acts.”

“Yes ! I am glad that it has struck you too as requiring some explanation ; how it is that our physical powers obey our minds.”

“There are so many things requiring explanation, that one must take some of them for granted,” said Cathal.

“I should not feel satisfied to agree in that easy way of disposing of difficulties,” said Mr. Schelling ; “on the contrary, I believe there is no link missing in the causes of things ; I believe that all nature obeys determined laws.”

“I agree with you,” answered Mr. Hyde, “there is no chance even in the flickering of that flame—no accident in the curls of smoke up the chimney ; but though all is according to natural law, there is a power above law, Providence, which may, and does sometimes, supersede it.”

“Are we not to think according to justice,

that perfect laws are irremovable by a perfect being? for the only reason why a law should ever be abrogated is that it is wrong, or that it no longer suits the times. 'The first objection applies not to divine law. The second, only belongs to mortality, for the great first cause does not acknowledge time.'

"I believe with you, that perfect laws are immutable and irrecallable," replied Mr. Hyde, "and I quite agree that all creation was linked in one circle of obedient order; but man broke through it—he put himself without the influence of this unchanging law of perfect nature.—And since the fall, I conceive he has strayed beyond the precincts of the unbroken natural causation in which he once existed."

"I cannot try conclusions with you on scriptural ground," said Mr. Schelling, "our deductions from them are so different; but I am glad we are so far agreed in our belief that there is a continuous causation ruling all the apparently accidental circumstances around us."

"Yes, I am a believer," Mr. Hyde answered, "in the self-supporting character of creation. I will even go farther, and say that I think there is no peculiar interference with the order of nature; but man has put himself without her

pale ; and for him has been appointed the supernatural law of Providence. I cannot assent to your implication, that he is in all his actions necessarily following certain rules ; for I think there are no rules or laws but what emanate from God, and to say, we sinned according to rule, would be to impute evil laws to Him."

"We cannot meet on fair grounds," said Mr. Schelling ; "you are prejudiced, from your office ; I, perhaps, from my love of reducing all facts to natural law. It has always been a favourite theory with me, that no event ever was, which could not be ascribed to a rule ; and that there were no rules that were not caused by inevitable concurrences of circumstances."

"That leads to direct materialism," said Mr. Hyde, gravely ; "but even granting that there be a species of materialism in nature—allowing that it has a self-producing, and self-existing circle of laws,—man is completely removed from this regularity of action, by his fall."

"Then if you reject the existence of necessary laws, producing the combinations on every side of us, how do you account for these combinations ? why does one man fall from a scaffolding ? why is another safe, though he be within an inch of the same accident ?"

“The direct answer to that, is my assertion that Providence rules these things for us.”

“Yet by all analogy of nature, there are no breaks in causation ; the sun’s heat gathers up the water from the ground, that it may fall again, and refresh the fields ; the plants grow from earth, and when their end is attained, they become earth again. In all these things, we see exquisite circles of laws ; and are we to suppose that the events which happen to man, are alone in the world ungoverned by these harmonious rules ?”

“I said not that there were no rules for the events which occur to man ; but that in his own actions, he had become an alien from natural law.”

“Then if there be these rules, is not what I said, true ? and where does a supernatural Providence act, if the events which happen to us are self-produced by the laws of nature ?”

Mrs. More, who had been attentively listening to the conversation, dry as it was, and rather incomprehensible, seemed surprised at this remark.

“I do not quite understand what you mean by laws of nature, independent of Providence,” she said, “though Mr. Hyde has allowed you that such may be.”

“We Christians must know, and believe,” answered the Rector, “that original creation was providential; but at the creation of matter, was also the creation of laws, by which matter was to be controlled. I will allow to Mr. Schelling that these laws maintain nature, and that there is no immediate interference in its operations, though it is of course, subject to the Supreme; but in opposition to him, I maintain, that through sin, man has become exotic to nature, and that he is under a special supernatural law, or direct Providence, framed for his condition.”

“I did not quite understand you,” rejoined Mrs. More, “when you said that the curls of smoke obeyed a law in even the form they took. We know smoke goes upwards; but would you say, law governed the eccentricities of its ascent?”

“I would say, my dear madam,” Mr. Hyde replied, “that there are no eccentricities in all the domain of nature, except in man. I believe that by accurate statistics, it has been found, that even in the shape of a leaf there is a rule followed; that suppose one leaf was found in three millions of leaves, of a peculiar form, in another three millions of leaves, a similar leaf might be found; and so on, with a species of infinite precision incomprehensible to our minds.

There is no real irregularity in nature, in spite of its variety ; and it is sin which has produced irregularity in men. There being, therefore, no sin in any part of creation, except in man, we are to suppose there can be no irregularity in that."

"It does seem strange," said Mrs. More ; "this accurate rule, in what one has been accustomed to consider either chance, or the works of Providence."

"Yes ! but the truth that this rule exists in the minutest work of nature, being once established, most singular and convincing facts can be brought to its support."

"Yes !" said Mr. Schelling, "I have seen some wonderful tables, gathered by industrious examiners of nature ; but why, since you so fully agree with me so far, will you not admit that man is also governed by similar rules, and that what seems to him chance, is but the consequence of law ; though a law covering so great an extent of time and space, that we can scarcely comprehend or follow its operations ?"

"Because the whole tenor of revelation exhibits to us man, cast adrift as it were from his right moorings ; an alien from the law which he has broken. You doubtless know my grounds

for trusting revelation in preference to arguments, however ingenious, of man's framing."

"But how do you account for accidents—for events? Do you join the worshippers of chance? I am on safer ground; for I suppose a law created by the first cause, to govern all," said Mr. Schelling.

"Following what I conceive to be the teaching of the Bible, I consider all the events which personally concern man—his good and happiness, his evil and misfortune—to be brought about by the agency of good and evil spirits."

"Such a belief in the nineteenth century!" exclaimed Mr. Schelling, with a half-sneer; "it is worthy of the ninth! I am myself not incredulous of the spiritual existencies; but I hold man to be equal to, and independent of them."

"In Scripture," said Mr. Hyde, regardless of his manner, "we find mysterious, but unmistakeable, mention made of their intervention in the affairs of man. Glimpses of their being and office are allowed us; and we must ever hold in view, that the Bible is not a book intended merely to show the world the principles and belief of one man. There is nothing unnecessary for each individual in it; and the mention of angels is made, that we should believe in their

existence; not that we should simply acknowledge that they have figured in the histories of the patriarchs.”

I observed that Mr. Schelling never seemed to approve the introduction of Holy Writ as an evidence of truth, for he did not like to commit the scandal of refusing its testimony; and yet, except as it agreed with his theories, it had no weight with him. He said to Mrs. More, after a moment of pause—

“We have strayed far from our original starting point, but now that you have heard both sides, do you not think it more probable that there should be a law, even though yet undefined, than that there is a system of angelic interference in all that happens to us?”

“Perhaps so,” she answered; “if revelation did not show us providential agencies, and give us to understand their intervention.”

“Well!” said Mr. Schelling, trying to seem good-humoured, “if you believe all that, you have removed a strong prop to my argument for animal magnetism; for I was going to found it, in a measure, on your assent, which I hoped to gain, to the truth of there being a determined law for every circumstance in our existences. Animal magnetism I believe to be a clause in

this law. You, of course," he added, scoffingly, "believe mind and matter to be connected by angels."

"Not so fast, Mr. Schelling," interrupted Mr. Hyde; "I, indeed, resisted your theory, that all our circumstances are ordered by self-supportant laws, for that would be materialism; and I denied that our acts are produced by any external rule, for that is fatalism. There are natural laws, I fully admit, for us; but they do not govern our acts involuntarily, as they do the rest of creation—animal magnetism may be one of those laws."

"I think, like all unconcerned spectators of disputes, I see better what you differ in, than you do yourselves," said Mrs. More. "You mean, Mr. Schelling, that, for all events, there are exact immutable laws. You say, Mr. Hyde, that man has left the government of unchanging natural rule, and come under a new supernatural law, which is carried out by angelic machinery, though the angels again use natural means in their works."

"Yes!" said Mr. Schelling and his opponent, instantaneously.

"Well! for the sake of agreement," said Mr. Schelling, "I will admit that the working of

animal magnetism may be overruled ; but you will allow that by its agency exists the connexion between mind and matter, which we see so constantly and so mysteriously at work ?”

“ I do not see any objection to your theory,” answered Mr. Hyde.

“ Well, is it not curious ? This imperfectly-discovered power ?”

“ Yes !” said Mr. Hyde, “ and I the more willingly believe in it, in that I think its acknowledgment may give an additional impulse to religion.”

“ Really, I do not see how that should be !” exclaimed Mr. Schelling, impatiently. “ I am not one of those who would narrow all science to the bounds of a dogmatic creed or religious system.”

“ Forgive me for saying, Mr. Schelling,” said Mr. Hyde, courteously but firmly, “ that though your religious system may not be sufficiently Catholic to admit and comprehend all science, ours claims to contain not only perfect goodness, but perfect knowledge. It is the science of sciences, into which all others merge ; and if they be true, must of necessity tend.”

Mr. Schelling looked angry, but he evidently did not choose to enter into a discussion before

his son, in which he might be worsted—for he abruptly changed the subject. I have said before, that even to his own religion, he was not devoted, though pride and anger against Christians had made him a sincere hater of their faith. He was not, however, well versed in the ethics of his party; for, exclusively worldly in his character, physical and mechanical science had mostly been his study. Unitarianism was his profession; but he had no religion. Would that we had known his real character, then! Cathal was deceived into admiration, for his zeal, and thought, that though mistaken, it sprung from high and right motives. So did his son; and, though Mrs. More had begun to distrust him, she, too, gave him credit for sincere devotion to his creed. He had perceived that this was his strong-hold in all their minds; he was careful not to show any ignorance in the tenets of his religion, and to this end he dreaded their discussion. When Mr. Hyde had spoken thus gravely, therefore, of Catholicity, instead of replying, he turned to the young ladies, and apologized to them for the masculine and dry discussion in which he had been engaged, pleading, however, that he was not to blame.

“I really think,” he continued, “this place

must be pervaded by the genius of metaphysics ; for no sooner does one propound a simple matter of science or quiet reason, than it takes to itself wings, and flies off into some unknown exalted region."

"Why unknown?" said Agnes, in a quiet tone of surprise, which quite discomposed him ; but the dressing-bell rang, and we dispersed before he had time to answer.

After dinner, I heard him again press Cathal to fulfil his promise, not only in the letter, but in the spirit, by seeing his intentions carried out, and receiving for him the tenders of the workmen.

"We have arranged the plan together," he continued. "I will draw a rough sketch of it to-night, enough to set the country masons going ; for I am a tolerable architect, and know something of these matters."

"You will find it necessary, I suppose, to return in the spring, and superintend the building?" said Cathal, rather constrainedly ; "for, of course, you know, nothing but preliminaries can be done at this season."

"Yes ! yes ! but I wish to have all ready to set to work vigorously," interrupted Mr. Schelling impatiently, "and to begin the walls early in March. I know how dilatory your Irish work-

men are, and, if we waited to make our bargains, have the stones quarried, and the lime burnt till then, the summer would be over before we had done anything satisfactorily. You have still perfect freedom of retracting your promise," he continued,—for a very visible cloud had gathered on his host's brow, when he found himself thus forced into actual participation in the undertaking. "I do not wish to press you, my dear friend," he continued; "but are not your present doubts and fears very inconsistent with your notions last year? To aid you in your excellent plans, I made a great personal sacrifice, and, in return, I only begged for a tolerant concession, which you then acknowledged was not against your conscience. We made our very sensible agreement together. I was not wanting in mine, the more difficult part. Are you now childishly forgetful of the past? You then trusted me, and considered me as a friend. And now, when I have proved myself to be one, you treat me with doubt and distrust."

It was just the speech to check all Cathal's rising vexation. After all, he knew nothing of the evil within Mr. Schelling. It certainly was a Christian duty to be tolerant, he thought, and his honour was pledged. So he agreed, personally to assist his friend in his plans, with a kind of ex-

citement and enthusiasm, which overbore his right instincts of duty; overbore for the time—but there is always an impetus to right within us, which makes itself felt at last, however much we may discourage it. It is like a clear fountain, which will bubble up, even though it be bound down by the firmest mason-work man can build around it.

There is no such thing as decision in men, unless they are strictly guided by duty; for once that pole-star is lost sight of, they wander about in a trackless sea of their own feelings and passions. In the beginning of the day, Cathal had felt a dislike for Mr. Schelling, and distrust of his advice; and yet in the evening, an appeal to his honour and kindly feelings had been all powerful with him, and he was eager to vindicate them. Impulses and right feelings seldom produce good actions, for they die away or change when the moment of action comes; and even when they are the means of good, it is through the over-ruling of a higher Power, and not of our own will. They are always utterly worthless to their follower.

But it is a foolish waste of time to write lessons which the reader can readily draw for himself. I will confine myself to my story, which will show how Cathal was tossed about in his intentions and views, because at the first step he had looked

away from duty to philanthropy, and expediency ; for though philanthropy is a beacon, to which we must have regard in our voyage, as it helps to point out the course, yet duty is the light to which we must undeviatingly steer ; regardless of the mischievous blaze of expediency kindled by wreckers, who hope to gain, when we are lost on their shore."

"Yes ! you are right, Schelling," exclaimed Cathal, as his guest finished speaking. "I will help you, and it will not only be as a duty, but with my good will. You rather offended me last night, by dictating to me, as I thought."

"My dear fellow ! I did not dream of dictating—I only wanted to show you our clear positions in this matter. I believe I have adopted some of the English brusquerie," he added, with an air of candour ; "but I trusted you would fully understand my good intentions."

"Say no more," interrupted Cathal ; "let our mutual assistance be an understood and defined arrangement from henceforth ; and you must convince my mother of the misfortunes that intolerance has brought on her country."

"Why, partisanship has become quite a habit in Ireland, among those of your mother's age ; as for to-night, I see Mr. Hyde has gone to

the drawing-room with Rupert ; and he is before me in the field. Apropos, he is a clever man ; what a pity that he should be in a profession which necessarily narrows his views."

" He could not very well be in a better," said Cathal, rather warmly ; for he was stung by the remark, as he had a high respect for all the ministers of religion.

Mr. Schelling saw it was better not to press his remarks on that subject. " Shall we go and see what they are about?" he said. I had been sitting in a dark corner, unobserved by them as they talked ; and they left the room, while I thought sorrowfully over the weakness, or rather indolence of thought, which was leading Cathal into such unfortunate acts. The evening was spent in music. Agnes and Catherine singing some of the old-fashioned duets, in which the melody seems to wander about, losing itself in mazes of harmony, and then returning bar by bar, part by part, until melody and harmony form one perfect whole. Among his other tastes, Rupert Schelling was intensely, dreamily, musical. He was weak in bodily strength,—his physical constitution was frail, and so he had cultivated his powers of reception, while his powers of action lay unused, until sweet sounds and all the in-

fluences which come upon us, from without by the "large joy of sight and touch," had gained such constant entrance, that they had become almost necessary to him, eagerly feeding on them as he did. His eyes gleamed with pleasure as he listened to Catherine's clear soprano voice, relieved by the mellow contralto which seemed to pour, without an effort, almost involuntarily, from Agnes.

Mr. Schelling joined Mrs. More; he knew a good deal of the science of music, and had invented some valuable improvements in the mechanism of pianos. But it spoiled the effect of the soft accompaniment Agnes was playing, to hear of the machinery by which it was produced. He was very disenchanting, and there was a narrowness, an angularity about his thoughts, which made them felt with sharp unpleasantness. They were always sure to awaken any auditors of his, if they had ventured into Dreamland, to a sense of the materialism in all around them. His conversations and mind seemed a *résumé* of the accurate sciences. He had gathered knowledge from the exterior of things; he knew the forms and size, so to speak, of the facts around him, but he felt not their real import—he was blind to their true uses; those true uses which Mrs. More found for all things—the uses of all-embracing Catholic

religion. Mr. Schelling and Mrs. More were singularly antagonistic in all their tendencies, and on almost all subjects they differed. He saw in things only their bare human uses,—but the type of truth. She looked beyond the type, to the real meaning. Our senses contact matter, yet until we distil the spirit-truth from the meeting such experience avails nothing ; for it is only the hidden import in things which can be said indeed to be true. It is good to discern it—it is good, like Mrs. More, to trace it to its fountain, even from the smallest springs, and the most insignificant facts.

CHAPTER XVI.

I DID not meet the Schellings again. Nor, indeed, did I much wish to see them ; for the elder was associated in my mind with very painful thoughts of Cathal's dereliction from duty, and Mrs. More's consequent annoyance. Since his first arrival, there had not been the same complete harmony which before had existed between mother and son : there was not absolute disunion ; in manner he was as kind as ever, and she as trusting ; but I, who knew them so well, could perceive the cloud which had come between them, the cloud of difference on religious opinion, which is so alienating when it separates those who are earnest on the subject. Even Mrs. More's kind manner had not altogether taken the sting from her disagreement with her son ; they were not on such trusting terms as formerly. There was a slight tinge of bitterness in his feelings on the matter, for he felt himself disapproved by his mother, and Mr. Hyde, to whose judgment he had for so long trusted ; and even Major Wynd-

ham seemed to take a higher standard than he did. He found himself, in a manner, separated from all his old ties at home, and thrown upon his own independence, and the friendship of Mr. Schelling. He did not admit to himself how great an influence had been gained over him: perhaps he scarcely knew it, but his indolence prompted him to lean on some one; and the very act by which he had alienated himself from the confidence of his old supports, had thrown him on Mr. Schelling for strength and advice.

His new friend, by his versatile talent and acute judgment of human nature, was especially suited to influence and guide all who were too weak, or too indolent, to judge for themselves. Over many he had gained great influence, and he had been able to achieve much success in the propagation of his theories; a success which seemed unlikely to be attained by one comparatively insignificant man, and which I scarcely believed when I afterwards heard of it, until proofs were set before me, of the extent of his machinations. It was strange, too, how much disunion he had introduced among families, by his pernicious principles, which he veiled under the greatest seeming uprightness. Only Mrs. More's admirable temper and forbearance, and her son's affection for her, guarded their mutual love

and confidence from being even more deeply injured. After this second visit of Mr. Schelling's, Cathal became silent, and pre-occupied ; and very different from the gay, light-hearted young man, of the year before.

This change might perhaps have been partly accounted for, by the increase of business on his hands ; for he had given himself up to the management of his estate, and his duties as a country gentleman. Amongst his labours, was the foundation of the Unitarian chapel, for which Mr. Schelling had left him a plan. He had become almost callous to any sensation of pain, as he laid out the work, and superintended its progress ; for he carefully avoided thinking of its purpose, and the dangerous effects it might have ; he went through his undertaking, as if it were an ordinary improvement ; watching the stone and mortar progress, but dismissing all care for the evil, for which he was building a future stronghold.

His mother seldom walked near that part of the park where the chapel was being built. She became delicate in health, for anxiety broke her down, and enfeebled her naturally slight constitution ; still she did not cease in one of her good works ; and perhaps only *my* eye, accustomed to mark the changes from health to disease,

would have observed the sinking of her strength. In her expeditions to visit the poor, in which she often chose me for her companion, she was sometimes forced to stop and rest between the cottages. I became uneasy, and prescribed for her every tonic I could prepare ; but what could I do ? What could medicine do ? The canker which was undermining her health, was her son's conduct, and the consequent blight on their mutual confidence and affection, which had been before, always so great a satisfaction to her.

As I said, Cathal was quite devoted to business during this spring of '46—so much so, that I think he scarcely perceived his mother's increased weakness, and the advance of old age, which had come with such rapid strides upon her, since his concession to Mr. Schelling. He seemed to fear to look at home ; he hardened himself against all the home influences and home feelings which had formerly had so right a sway over him ; and he betook himself to work—to continual employment — that he might avoid thought. It seems to me a strange mistake of so many, who cry up the uses of incessant work, making all virtue to lie in it, and all vice to proceed from its cessation. Labour seems to me a curse, which we are indeed forced to suffer,

but in which, I cannot see why we should delight. I speak of labour, not of occupation—labour is the excess of occupation, and often prevents it; it is the exaggeration of the happy fulfilment of our powers—which was our original state—even as all our sins and misfortunes are the exaggeration of some primeval perfection.

Happiness is said to exist most pure among those who are debarred from thought, by continuous labour; yet I think it is but relief from pain which is thus gained, for nothing but contemplation and earnest thought, can confer true happiness, or real content; for in the mind, not the body, lies our real being; and in exercising the powers of the mind,—in the peaceful and unstrained employment which is natural to them, may we alone find lasting comfort. The peace which labour gives, is but a torpid sleep of our true selves; at last, there will come an inevitable waking. Cathal became immersed in business—the greatest misfortune, I think, which can occur to men; hardening,—obliterating every feeling, every tendency which might lead us to our future, and spirit, existence.

In all the duties which partook of business, he was exact as ever—in his attendance at church, in his gifts to the poor, in all externals; but his

internal love of right, his heart-felt charity, his religious devotion, were, for the, time, inert ; the sorrowful consequence almost always ensuent, on wilful opposition, or even blindness to right.

Mr. Hyde had seen the foundations of the new chapel laid, with feelings of just indignation at Cathal's weakness, in listening to, and following, such advice as Mr. Schelling's. Our Rector was a man of unflinching boldness, when wrong came before him, in his denunciation of it ; he did not, therefore, lightly pass over this insult to Christianity, perpetrated by his principal and most influential parishioner ; one from whom he had been justified in expecting better things. He could not meet with undiminished friendship a man whom he so seriously blamed ; at least, his former feelings of an almost fatherly partiality were checked ; and the intercourse between the manor-house and the rectory was necessarily less frequent, and less cordial than before. Mrs. More was as devoted as ever to his daughters, and they were as much as before with her, indeed almost more, for she felt that she was growing weak, and old ; and she was diligent in her care for their advancement and improvement, in truth and excellence. It was melancholy to see how care was beginning

to leave its print on Cathal; his hair already showed some streaks of gray, and his forehead was deeply marked with the furrows of pain, not thought. How different these two expressions are! the slight horizontal lines, adding dignity to the countenance, and the strong indentures caused by the frown of grief and care. He often spent the evenings at work in his study, not even coming into the drawing-room; and he was always engaged during the day—in fact, he became estranged from the circle he had so much delighted in; for both his pride and affection were wounded by the disapprobation with which even though unexpressed, he felt his former friends regarded him. Pride and affection were his most predominant characteristics, and he suffered intently when either was hurt. His youth had been almost cloudless, and from its novelty he seemed to feel more deeply the sorrow and pain which had come upon him. Sorrow and pain! the refiner's fire, through which we must needs pass; that bitter hyssop, with which all thresholds must be sprinkled, that the angel of death enter not in.

Major Wyndham went to England, for his usual leave, in the spring months; and he had also some arrangements to make for his coming

marriage ; for it had become a tacit understanding between him and Catherine, that he should be forgiven, though they had never, by even a word, violated their parole to Mrs. More and Mr. Hyde. Honour would always have determined him to such conduct ; but now his reverence for Mr. Hyde, as a clergyman of that church of which he had become so earnest a member, added to his strict sense of right. It was fortunate that in his course through life he had met with such a character as Mrs. More, for he was refined and fastidious by nature, to an unusual degree ; and it needed her purity of thought, and her refinement, greater than ever he had before met,—united as they were in her, to the highest principle,—to convince him that they were the consequence of it. He had spent much time in an unsuccessful search for his beau-ideal in refinement ; for the best sustained polish of manner, when unaccompanied by inward right, had always at last betrayed its hollowness. But he had been much struck in his conversation with Mrs. More, by the manner in which she had laid bare to him the true sources of refinement ; and he found his dream of perfection realized in her. He eagerly adopted, at first, for the gratification of his taste—but afterwards

from true feelings of devotion—"her God for his God; her people for his people."

In Catherine, he first admired her purity of feeling and taste; but as he learned to appreciate its source, his approval heightened into admiration. The delay in their engagement had been of great service to both; for they became assimilated and fitted for union, during this year of probation. Was there ever an event which was not calculated for good, if by our bad reception of it we have not frustrated its intent?

I have dwelt perhaps too long on this painful spring time. It was unmarked by aught unusual, except by a hasty visit for a day, in the month of March, from Mr. Schelling. His son did not accompany him; perhaps his father rather dreaded what he considered the dangerous influence of Mrs. More, of which he had before noticed the effects. I did not see him on this occasion, as a case, on which I was attending, occupied my time and attention, and Mrs. More told me that she too had seen but little of him, for that he spent the whole morning with her son, engaged in business, and giving orders and directions to a master mason, whom he had brought with him from the town of ———. Cathal said nothing to me on the subject, but I could see by the

rapid advance of the chapel, that the work had received a vigorous impulse. It promised to be a really beautiful edifice, in the early English style; and by its symmetry, it at once reminded me of the beauty of a graceful tree, which is said to be the type of gothic architecture.

Mr. Schelling neglected no means of appealing to the love of beauty inherent in us, in his work. He judged wisely, more wisely than those who neglect this love; for every right taste and principle in us is intended to be, and should be, made instrumental to the highest purpose—all should merge into it. Nor is religion perfect, until our nature and impulses, our love of beauty, music, painting, poetry, all that is dear to us, be incorporated with it. I am sure Mr. Schelling thought not of the reasons why religion should thus take captive all our right feelings, all that is good, or pure in us; but he had noted that it did, and he had seen the extraordinary spread of creeds which do not neglect to appeal to our whole nature; Catholic they may truly be called.

Why do some sincere religionists narrow their appeals to mere reason—to a single faculty, and that perhaps not the most perfect we possess? Does not religion require the renewal of our whole nature? Is not its end the perfection of

all our gifts? Should not then our whole nature assist in the great work, and should not all our gifts minister to their own purification? We are given many talents—shall we only traffic with one? Would that men would see the universality of Christianity, and how it embraces all their powers in its vastness; and cease in their effort to compass it about, with but one of their gifts! After all, they who do so weakly and presumptuously attempt, but gain the cold shadow of a fruitless, though dogmatic creed. It is said, that it is a lowering of Christianity, appealing to our human nature in its behalf. But what is Christianity? What is religion? It is not, surely, only a logical description of God, or a mere curious system, unrelating to man. Is it not, *our* religion? and intended for the salvation of *men*? and its whole purpose an appeal to human nature? It seems to me a great error, and a great misfortune, this externalizing of religion. Suppose the benefits of the sun depended on our reception of them, as those of Christianity do; and that we spent our lives in measuring his altitude and extent, and neglected to draw down his beams on earth, and forgot to employ his beneficent influence on all nature, leaving it in cold, dying barrenness.—And yet many treat

Christianity in this way. They believe in it, they measure it, and spend their lives in calculating its form and extent ; but yet they will not use it in the fructifying of their nature. They will not see that for this, was it revealed, and that from no part of nature, human nature, can its rays, without injury, be withdrawn.

The unornamental barn-like churches, which so often disgrace our worship, are a type of this reasonable narrowness. Utility, the counterpart of reason, in acts, is alone consulted in them, to the exclusion of imagination, beauty, that faith which would sacrifice worldly riches to God's honour, and often, even truth, by false imitations, which are excused on the plea that "they will do as well!" It is true, Christianity needs not ornaments of human invention, nor to be propped up by human support, but *we* need to sacrifice our all to it—to offer up our every talent in the service to which we are called.

Mr. Schelling, as I have said, did not work from the impulse of even his religion ; but worldly wisdom and experience had taught him the power which all faiths gain, when they come to us through the wide channel of our aspirations for whatever is lovely. Alas ! that that channel has not been more carefully employed

by our own church. Fewer sects, fewer heresies, would then have defiled her robe ; and because another church has made use of it to introduce evil, we should not, therefore, have neglected so important a mean.

Major Wyndham did not return from England until the very day before his year of probation expired, when he made his appearance at Cappagh.

“I should have found it very hard,” he said to Mrs. More, as they walked together after dinner, in the summer twilight, “I should have been too painfully tantalized, if I had been here much this spring ; the remembrance of last year’s happiness, the prospect before me, would have sadly tried my patience.”

“And did you feel no doubts, no re-attraction to the world, when you were in the world’s Eden—London?” asked Mrs. More.

“I deserve such a question,” he answered, “and yet it is a severe one ; will you not give me credit for any reason, or memory,—for any improvement?”

“I do, indeed, give you credit for all three,” said Mrs. More, affectionately ; “but where were they this time last year?”

“Let that be a dream, past—for ever past,”

exclaimed Major Wyndham ; “ does not Catherine forgive ? Why may not I forget ? ”

“ Nothing is past,” answered Mrs. More, gravely. “ Our mortality creates a past and a future, but, in truth, neither exists.”

“ A fearful thought for those who seek peace from oblivion,” said her companion.

“ But a happy one, for all who silently, continuously, follow duty,” returned Mrs. More. “ My dear friend, ever think of these things ; forgetfulness is but an opiate ; painful and awful must be the awakening from a rest gained by such means.”

“ I trust I may never cease to think of all that you have taught me,” said he, fervently.

“ What your nature, and God’s teaching, through our church, have taught you,” said Mrs. More, reprovingly.

“ I shall ever associate you with them, as their instrument,” said Major Wyndham ; “ and can I, for a moment forget you, while Catherine is by my side ? ”

“ She will, I trust, be a reminder to you of right,” answered Mrs. More. “ She is a beloved daughter to me, and yet I willingly entrust her to you ; if, when I am gone,” she continued, after an instant’s pause, “ you should think of me with kindness, remember this trust ; I do not recommend her to your love—to your present feelings ;

they, I know, need no further impulse ; but by the thoughts of what you have first known here, guard her from all moral harm."

"I will," answered Major Wyndham, earnestly ; "the memory of you, and of this year of my life, shall be ever present with me."

They did not know I heard them, as they passed and repassed the drawing-room window in which I sat, or how their voices were softened by the summer breeze, until they sounded like the whisperings of superior spirits ; and, when they came in, the illusion was hardly dispelled, for their earnest peaceful countenances were lighted by the mysterious glow following the summer sunset, which streamed in through the windows.

It was settled that Major Wyndham should go to the rectory, to ask forgiveness and renewed love from Catherine ; it was but a form—for they had for long been silently granted. Yet he longingly had wished for this formal reinstallation in her confidence, that he might again wander with her through the intricacies of the summer wood, and the still more sunshiny and summery mazes of their own minds.

A ray of this sunshine seemed to have fallen on all of us, even on Cathal, as we met the next

evening at dinner at Cappagh ; it was a temporary break in the cloud which had fallen over our small society. We could not, any of us, refuse to rejoice in the happiness of two so dear to us ; and, besides, it seemed almost too much for them—overflowing,—and their companions must needs receive some drops from their full cup. It was pleasant to welcome back the look of ease and contentment on Cathal's face, which had been so long a stranger there ; and we were, for the day, almost more happy than before we knew what it was, not to be. Agnes joined in his feeling of relief ; for, already, though unknown to her, she was impressed by his impressions. She did not measure her sensations, for she was not one of those who dissect their every feeling, and hers were too deep, perhaps too sensitive, to allow of such a process. Though she loved, she did not know it ; for the depth, and height and breadth of her love, covered and included her powers of calculation and analyzation ; they were powerless to count the degree of its greatness, though clear to judge of right ; clear to measure the fitness of her acts ; clear in that human, mortal knowledge of right and wrong, which is the painful consequence, and antidote to, our fall. But what have reason, knowledge, wisdom, to do

with the great principle of love? they cannot judge of it; it is too high for them, even the mortal and fallen branch of this great tree of life—human Love; it is immeasurable and uncontrollable by our other gifts, for they proceed from, and finish in it. Agnes had much love, love for both God and man—the first governing duty, the second, benevolence, pervaded her thoughts and acts. It seems, perhaps, irreverend and unsuitable, to place in the same list her growing affection for Cathal; yet I think not—for it was an impulse of that energy of life—a branch of the higher principle, which controlled her life.

Do not, good reader, think me foolishly enthusiastic in this description of Agnes. There are, truly, few like her on earth; but, if you have not chanced to meet them in your path, do not, therefore, disbelieve in the existence of here and there a mortal angel, reviving and strengthening our belief in the existence of their home—Heaven, and their fellows,—the spirits there. They are rare, perhaps, and one like Agnes I had never met, nor do I ever expect to meet. She was eclectic, insomuch as she had gathered good from all things, and the tares of error seemed to take no root in her. She was a Saint Agnes and

Saint Lucia united—purity and love. I must be enthusiastic, when I think and write of her. You do not know her, however ; you will not be much wiser from my imperfect description, so I must needs be silent, though I would gladly write books and books, in her praise.

Major Wyndham's marriage was quickly settled, and no delay occurred, or was allowed to occur, in the necessary arrangements. The settlements were mostly to be made on his side, for, as a clergyman's daughter, Catherine's fortune was not large, and it was perfectly accessible and manageable, as it was invested in the funds. He had given a draft of his intentions to his solicitor before he left England, and much preliminary ground had been got over, that all might be in readiness for his quick release from probation. All his plans were on a scale of such magnificence towards his future wife, in the matters of pin-money and jointure ; with such considerate kindness to every wish she had ever inadvertently expressed, that the only objections raised, were to his over-generosity, scruples to which he would not for a moment attend.

When first he had become attached to his daughter, Mr. Hyde had not known enough of his future son-in-law to feel any of the confidence of

friendship towards him; he had given his consent, but it was more from the attachment which Catherine felt, and Mrs. More's predilection for Major Wyndham, than from his own decision; but he had noticed, with satisfaction, his growth in all good; he had often found him a companion in his highest thoughts, and he had become to him more than a mere son-in-law—a personal and valued friend, to whom he gladly and confidently gave his daughter. Major Wyndham, too, had learned to respect Mr. Hyde's character, and to admire his distinguished wisdom—the wisdom not of the world, not of experience, but gained from a higher source.

There were a certain sternness and command in our rector, which were well calculated to create respect in Major Wyndham; for he was not one of those who dislike strong determination in others, because they are themselves weak, and fear to be influenced. On the contrary, he revered the unflinching adherence to principle, and the undeviating upward course which marked every act of Mr. Hyde's. He was a man of the mould of St. James; stern in his denunciation and dislike of wrong, leaning more in predilection to the poor than to the rich. Strict in justice, high and pure in his estimates of duty, his

mind possessed rather noble, athletic, idealized strength, than grace and beauty ; he was a Hercules rather than an Apollo ; a gladiator, ready to fight with wild beasts at Ephesus, rather than a charmer, charming the serpents of sin by softening art.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE month of June, '46, was marked by singular heat and dryness, to a degree that was oppressive to us, inhabitants of so temperate a climate, unprepared as we are, by ingenious contrivances, to ward off the inconveniences of too much sun.

At mid-day we sometimes adjourned to the waterfall, which fell so far clear of the rocks over which it dashed, that one could creep under it, and sit in a bower of over-arching spray, enjoying the cool breeze that its fall always created; and, if a ray of sun reached us, it was caught in the prism of the falling water, and came upon us with the colouring of a painted window. The trees above interlaced their branches, until one could fancy oneself in a ruined cathedral, through whose broken roof the sky looked like blue Mosaic work.

But we were not often so selfish as to intrude on this retreat, for it was mostly occupied by Major Wyndham and his betrothed, a fitting place

for them, for the whispering of the water, without the little cave, guarded their discourse from any curious ears, while they planned their future life, and described the past. And if they were hidden from even their friends at Cappagh, I must not repeat their converse to chance readers.

At last, the day before their marriage arrived—a day of such mingled hopes and fears, and such quickly-changing joy and sorrow to the bride, that her thoughts, by their hurrying alternation, scarcely seemed her own—when reflection was impossible, and her whole being was in such an eddy of contending feelings, that she was as in a dream,—that strange condition, when reason seems to leave us, though all our other powers yet exist. Disjointed fragments of her past life, chased by thoughts of the future—her woman-love for her husband competing with her deep sisterly devotion—thankfulness for the past, and thoughts of its happiness, hopes for the future, preparations for new duties, sorrow for the neglect of those which had been unfulfilled even in her pure youth, made a conflict of sensations so overpowering, that she begged to be alone for a time; and some hours after, we found her, wearied by emotion, asleep under the protecting branches of a beech near the house. She slept, and Major Wyndham watched

her, until the dews began to fall, and she must needs be awaked. Then she walked dreamily home, silently leaning on his arm ; while the moon cast a silver cloak over them, and gazed down into her blue eyes, where it saw its own innocence reflected, and felt a kind of sisterhood with her ; for while she slept had not her spirit been “commercing with the skies,” and the turmoil of her thoughts hushed, and peace substituted ?

Peace ! we all felt its influence ; and even in Cathal, for that evening, the tyranny of his care was overpast. We sat silent and quieted, not caring to break the spell by general conversation ; but Agnes opened the piano noiselessly, and, when she played the symphony of Handel’s pastoral, “How beautiful are the feet !” we felt that she had touched chords to which all our thoughts were in unison ; and my imagination almost persuaded me, that the soft rustle of the evening breeze, among the leaves, was the voice of nature joining in our anthem of unspoken happiness.

The wedding morning rose brightly, and not a cloud flecked the sky during the whole day—a rare event in Ireland. No cloud was on the horizon of their hopes, as the bride and bridegroom drove from the Rectory, after the church had pronounced their union.

Of course, we could but feel their departure as a serious loss in our pleasant communings, and for some days, grave looks and silence put to flight all gaiety ; but almost immediately afterwards, the great desolation of '46 absorbed all lesser and personal regrets. It was but two days after the wedding, that I began to observe the singular atmospheric phenomena, which were the precursors of the destruction—the total annihilation of the food, which was almost the only sustenance of six millions. The heat had become nearly overpowering, and all nature lay panting in it. The streams and ponds in our neighbourhood were for the most part dried up, and a malaria rose from the dead fishes and water insects in them. The grass broke short off, and crackled under my feet, and sheep and cattle found with difficulty, stray tufts that were not withered by the sun.

I remember one day, nearly the last of the scorching sunshine, as I was out visiting a child who had suffered slightly from *coup de soleil*, seeing a singular haze over the landscape, on which were reflected trees and fields, while a broad glassy lake seemed to bound the horizon. The picture was not still, but waved to and fro with a quivering motion, that made me giddy to look at. I suppose it was a mirage, caused by the

heated air ; but the state of the atmosphere which produced it, had a curious effect on me, producing a violent headache and giddiness, which lasted for two or three days. I was forced to lie down for an hour or two after my return ; and, when I again looked out, to my delight,—for the severe drought had injured the country very much,—I saw a heavy cloud, shaped like a pillar, advancing rapidly across the sky. It had already obscured the sun, and the hushed darkness which ensued, was not unlike the effect of an eclipse. The cloud was of a copper colour, unusual in Ireland, and on some of its involutions,—for it seemed to advance in circles—there was a strange livid glow, as if great furnace fires were reflected on them. I stood with a sensation of awe, watching the signs of the coming storm ; and, as the broken masses of cloud came over me, I listened eagerly for the rain-drops, which I momentarily expected. But on and on they moved, with a fearful gloom, until the whole sky was overcast, yet without bringing even a breath of damp air. They seemed to breathe down heat, upon the already parched earth ; and hanging over it like a pall, to press back on us the exhalations, which before, had, at least, risen into the sky. I sat watching the overspread heavens, until night came. It brought no relief,

not even the coolness of darkness, for the sky glowed luridly, casting a glare over every object. I started, as I used my pocket-handkerchief, for the white caught the rays of light, and looked in the twilight almost as if it were tinged by blood. I listened for the hum which usually arises from insects before rain ; not a sound was audible, and even the villagers' voices were hushed. At last, I could no longer bear the strange influence the weather exercised on me, and I went out, rattling some keys that were in my pocket, I remember, that there might be a break to the death-like silence. I walked to the nearest rising ground, to look out for further signs of the threatened storm ; but not a leaf was stirring. I saw a bird sitting on a spray, which crossed my path ; it did not move as I approached, and allowed me to take it with little difficulty. That incident, small as it was, filled me with awe. "Is God so near," I thought, "that his creatures forget their relations to each other?"

From the first rising ground I came to, I perceived the source of the firelight which was spread over the sky ; for, to the east, the horizon gleamed with lightning, not in occasional flashes, but spread along it, like a sheet of flame.

I am not, I think, weak or superstitious be-

yond most men ; but considerations of reason and science disappeared from my mind, as I gazed, and I felt impelled to bow my head in awe before the handwriting on the heavens ; and, when I did so, I heard a low roll and mutter of thunder, which seemed to proceed less from the sky than from the ground I stood on, until I could almost fancy I felt its vibrations.

I could not choose but gaze at the red sky, and listen to the deepening roar, until every faculty was absorbed in attention.

Gradually the sparks and flashes spread from the horizon upwards, darting forward towards the zenith, as if to set it too on fire, and lighting up, as they passed, the caverns of cloud.

At last, a dazzling, blinding brightness fell upon me ; I heard a strange rustling of leaves—and then I must have become insensible, for when I recovered, it was daylight, and I was in my own room. I eagerly inquired what had happened ; and I heard that some one, attracted out by the same wonder as myself, had found me lying on the ground, hard by a lightning-blasted tree !

It was between nine and ten when I became sufficiently strong, again to watch the weather from my window. No rain had fallen, the

dark fiery cloud yet hung oppressively over the earth; and though the thunder was more distant, and the lightning less frequent or visible by daylight, a continuous muffled roll was still to be heard, silencing every other voice of Nature. Even the air seemed paralyzed, for not a breath stirred, to dispel the sulphureous vapour which filled the atmosphere.

I was too ill to leave my room; but both Mr. Hyde and Cathal came to visit me, when they heard of my accident. They, too, had been strangely startled by the storm, and Cathal had a long list of casualties caused by it, of which to tell me.

“It is strange, that no rain falls,” he said; “the country looks black from drought, and every thing green, is shrivelled as if it had been scorched; the cattle seem scared by the lightning, and will not eat.”

The storm continued thus for two days and nights, during which the distant thunder ceased not to roll at intervals, while the heavens remained red and fiery, heavily clouded, and yet not distilling one drop of moisture.

I observed that while this weather lasted, several of my patients, who were but slightly ill, were strangely delirious. Delirium showed itself

in diseases, in which, till then, I had never observed it.

At last, fell the rain—rain, the violence of which, equalled the preceding storm. I scarcely remember a lull in the heavy splash of the thunder-drops, during the whole of the second week in July ; but, for hours, the hardened earth would not receive them, and running down our mountains in streams, collected in great floods, which covered the low grounds, undermining the mud-walls of many cottages, and driving their inhabitants to seek for shelter with their neighbours.

The hot earth steamed with unwholesome vapour, as the tepid water fell upon it, and reeked under the rotting leaves, which had been too withered to recover. The smell of death was everywhere. The rain appeared to have come too late for mercy, and to be rather the completion of the heat's destructive work. It was so heavy, that I observed the drops joining in their fall, washing away, rather than refreshing the soil.

I was out on professional duty, one day during its continuance ; but, as I drove along under the dense fall of water, I could scarcely see the hedges beside the road ; a dank steam rose from the ground, obscuring every object, through which

the stray branches hung across the path their blackened, drooping leaves, weighed down by moisture.

One road, which lay by the river, was so flooded that it was impassable, and yet, unfortunately, it was the only way to a patient who was seriously ill. I had been very uneasy about her, for it was a woman ; and it was no small relief to me, on the fifth morning, to see rapidly increasing patches of blue sky, as the white clouds rolled heavily away—a few moments found me driving rapidly along the road to her house, from which the flood had already partly subsided. A quick breeze had cleared away the heavy vapour, and allowed me to see the ravages of the storm on the landscape at each side of my way. The hedges which lined it were almost hidden by the earth and rubbish which they had caught from the stream as it passed, and fields of what had been careful tillage, were now tracts of reeking mud, shapeless and undefined, with here and there a hillock formed by the torrent's collected spoils. Many animals were found drowned in these slimy barrows, and one of them, I afterwards heard, which I passed that morning, ignorantly, was formed over the body of a child. I attended the inquest on it ; and as I looked on its slimy hair,

its blue eyes filled with mud, and its hands holding in their death-gripe straws and black weeds, and sorrowed over its sad fate, I little thought that it was blessed in its preservation from coming suffering, and probably, a sadder death.

Along the course of the river, the earth and stones which it had swept down, covered the adjacent fields,—yet there was nothing unnatural, however horrible, in the destruction it had worked; but as I gained the open country, and saw the blackened, fetid, potato fields, and the levelled wheat and oats, I was filled with sad astonishment and dismay. I drew up my horse by the side of one of the worst-looking fields, and hastily joined a man who was examining some plants, that he might discover the extent of the injury. He handed me a few roots silently; the cancerous disease had already spread over the surface; and when I pressed them, a black juice ran from them.

“They are gone, entirely gone,” said the poor fellow, “and the poor must follow them.” I looked at him, and saw the lines that recent tears had made down his cheeks,—I could attempt no consolation—what had I to offer? As I passed on my way, I saw groups in most of the potato fields, some crying silently; fathers watching their children, as they despairingly tore

up the soft black stalks ; mothers pressing their startled infants to their breasts, and rocking them with the wild wail of Irish misery. I could bear these sights no longer ; and catching up my reins, I forced the horse, at his quickest pace, to my destination—where, not trusting myself to speak on any other subject—I hastily prescribed for my patient, and drove in a gallop back to my own house.

I could not bear the solitude of my own thoughts, however, and I walked up to Cappagh to consult my friends there, about the immediate necessities of those who had suffered most severely from the flood. I found Mrs. More lying on a sofa—an unusual indulgence for her. Her son was with her, and by the grave looks of both, I perceived that they knew, and fully estimated, the calamity which had come upon the country.

“I am glad you are come, Doctor,” she said, “I have so much to ask you, and so much with which to trouble you.”

“Before you speak of other things,” I said, “you must let me know how you yourself are ; this weather has tried the strongest.”

“But not me,” she answered quickly.

I insisted on feeling her pulse ; it was weak and fluttering.

“ Do not either think of me, or make me think of myself,” she said, as she watched my grave face.

I turned to Cathal. “ Your mother,” I said, “ requires rest and change, especially now, when this country will be unhealthy.” He started,—his mother’s delicacy seemed to be a new idea to him.

“ Doctor,” she interrupted impatiently, “ I beg you to say no more ; I will not leave home now. Cathal, believe me, I am well—indeed I am ;” and she walked up and down the room with a borrowed strength, lent by her energy of spirit.

I could not oppose her, for the least excitement would have been injurious to her ; and I was obliged to content myself by ordering her strengthening medicines, and warning her against over-exertion.

For a day or two, she was thoroughly prostrated by the misfortunes which her clear judgment foresaw would follow the failure of the people’s food ; but her desire to help some of the sufferers from the river flood, was of use to her, rousing her from the depression which at first overcame her ; however, I insisted on her not

going out while the air was yet so unwholesome.

She deputed Agnes, with me, to inquire into the cases of the most unfortunate, to many of whom, were given a temporary lodging in the offices, some even in the house of Cappagh, while their cottages were being renewed; and Cathal marked an immediate abatement to those amongst his tenants, whose farms had suffered from the torrent. He waited to see the consequence of the general potato failure, before he made arrangements on that score.

While we were engaged in these busy charities, the consciousness of right cheered every one of us, and in the common necessity, Mr. Schelling and his influence were forgotten; for at that time, Mrs. More and her son were yet able to save their poor from absolute want; they had not *then* the deep unhappiness of witnessing misery that they could not alleviate.

I have before said, that Cathal, though heir of a race which formerly possessed all the plain, visible from the mountain-top, which rose over Cappagh, was not rich. His rental was between three and four thousand pounds a year, much of it paid by his tenants' labour, and a great deal accruing from the petty rents of the cot-

tiers, whom his father had encouraged on his estate.

He was, as we have seen, heavily encumbered by his debt of twenty thousand pounds, borrowed from Mr. Schelling, at four per cent, to discharge his father's debts.

It was needful to meet the interest on this, to the day ; for as he did not anticipate any delay in his payments when he contracted with his friend, he had not objected to a clause inserted by Mr. Schelling, to the effect that for any time that the interest on his mortgage was overdue, it should accrue at an increase of six per cent. A dangerous proviso for such a debt, on such an estate. Mrs. More had also a jointure of six hundred pounds yearly, which at that time was considered prior to Mr. Schelling's claim ; and though but little of it was spent on her own personal wants, yet it was a lien on her son's estate, and he was left but a poor man, after deducting from his receipts, the expenses entailed by his improvements, and philanthropic schemes.

The potato failure of the autumn before had greatly exhausted his means, for he had considered it as a misfortune peculiar to that year, and unlikely to re-occur ; and during it, he had spent his whole income, together with the surplus

of Mr. Schelling's loan, in giving employment to his tenants,—to most of the villagers, in fact. This repetition of disaster, therefore, came upon him with alarming surprise ; and the abatement he felt called on by justice, to allow his tenants, was incompatible with his former charities, pushed as they had been, to the utmost extent of his means.

It was during the month of September, that these things began to press on him with painful reality ;—more, however, as future cares, than present poverty—for the high prices his farm produce fetched that famine year, made up in a manner the deficit in his rents.

But the future is present to well educated minds ; and these thoughts could not but be earnest and serious to Cathal. The bond of working in unison, which had drawn him and his mother together, during the first distresses of the summer, led him to consult her on his future prospects—for he was ever anxious for advice. It was well that on this occasion he sought hers.

Instant retrenchment in all superfluous luxuries, was her determination ; while she urged her son, at the same time, to continue, if by any means he could, the employment of the poor, on even a larger scale than formerly. She insisted on his

freely using her jointure ; and increased economy in her household management, enabled her to give back to him—much of what he set apart for such uses.

There was no delay in Mrs. More's plans—they were at once acted on ; and by her instant reforms, her son was able to meet, with his former punctuality, his November half year's interest, to the day, and to maintain even a greater number of labourers than before—though to do so, he and his mother denied themselves all but the bare necessities of life.

Nothing, however, could stop the inevitable famine from at last reaching the large ruined village, and his over-populated estate. Over-populated truly. On a surface of not four thousand acres, there were upwards of a thousand cottier holdings, most of them containing little more than a house and a small potato garden, of from half an acre to an acre in extent. Supposing an average of five in each of the families living in these cottages ; let the reader imagine a body of from three to four thousand souls entirely dependent, since the potato failure, on labour for support, and without another hope of subsistence, except what might be gained by begging or stealing.

Cathal employed three hundred in his farm ;

but "what was that among so many?" Little indeed—but still his utmost.

Christmas came at last, sternly and silently ; for no merry voices sounded, as in old times, round a heavily laden table. One small joint of beef and some boiled rice were placed before us, while we anxiously discussed what could be done.

"There is no actual starvation yet," I said ; "the poor are living by the pawn office ; but with these high prices for food, that cannot last for more than a month, with most of them."

"Then I fear the roadworks, which we have tried to avoid, must be resorted to," said Mrs. More ; "and a soup kitchen must be established."

"They will ruin the morale of the people," I said.

"We cannot let them starve, Doctor," she replied ; "we cannot employ them all, or give them money to emigrate. I fear," she continued, addressing her son, "that you must at last apply to the government officers."

He sorrowfully assented ; and before many days had passed, a committee had been formed among the principal parishioners, and a soup kitchen had been set up, by means of an advance of money from the government, for the relief ostensibly of such as could not procure work, while at the

same time an official surveyor planned the leveling of a hill on the road, which absorbed a crowd of miserable, broken-down labourers.

Mrs. More saw the necessity, but she also foresaw the abiding evil these two modes of relief would entail, on the hitherto exemplary inhabitants of the little town; the demoralization, the family discord, the uncountable train of evils which they led to. She saw her plans for their good marred, her improvements rendered useless, and all her life-labours ruined; yet she did not for one moment slacken in her efforts—no disappointment stopped her; on and on she persevered, for duty, and not success, was her aim.

Agnes was trained in her ways; and untiringly these two angel-spirits sought to stem the tide of misery that rushed in on Cappagh; some waves they did turn aside, and many were by their means preserved from the lingering torture of famine.

I have slightly sketched the village, as it was in its prosperity. After the spring of '47, scarce a feature remained of what it was then, in the mass of ruin. The heavy rain of the summer before, had caused a damp in all the cottages on which it fell, which oozed in a green slime from the walls, and, undermining the walls, and bursting the mortar, gave a ruinous aspect to the for-

merly trim houses. The thatch on them rotted from the constant wet, and was soon overgrown with moss and weeds ; and the slated houses were even more injured, for the walls bulged from moisture, and settling down with great cracks, pulled the rafters awry, and displacing the slates, left broad holes in the roofs, through which the winter's rain soon destroyed the wood-work within. Even the usual supply of turf was wanting to repair this damage ; for much had been destroyed on the bogs by the storm, and the few who had saved any, sold it by the sod for food.

“ Food ! Food ! ” All was unheeded in the despairing cry of the poor. The half-maddened inhabitants cared not for the ruin of their houses, or for the poverty of their clothes—rags that the pawnbroker had rejected. Food was their only thought—their other instincts were absorbed in desire for it. The guilt of stealing, the fear of detection, were absolutely obliterated ; even the charities of relationship, which cling so closely to Irish hearts, were forgotten. Mothers tore the pilfered turnip, or the dog-gnawed bone from their children, and families fought and struggled with all the strength yet left to them, for morsels, such as we should turn aside from, with loathing.

The soup-kitchen indeed was there ; but so great

was the crowd of applicants for its scanty relief, that they could not be all supplied upon the same day, with even the small portion of gruel allotted to each. And then the nights, to those who had been disappointed ! I used to hear at nights, their fierce, impatient complaints, as I lay awake, in an agony of pity.

I shall never forget the faces of the crowd, who applied for orders to the clerk of the soup-kitchen, on the days that the committee sat ; there seemed nothing but faces, as I looked out of the window—a pavement of them—all gazing with bloodshot eyes in the one direction, with the same expression upon all. Men who had been independent labourers, earning enough and to spare for their wants, were there in shameless beggary, watching with impatience the food as it was poured out, and eating it, half-boiling as it was, without a thought of aught around them, until they were pushed aside by the next comer. Even women, with a boldness rare in Ireland, screamed and rioted as they fought their way through the dense crowd, and made a stir among the faces ; respectable women, too, who formerly boasted of well-trained families, and tidy households, now half naked, careless of all they had before esteemed. And children were there besides, whose fair heads I

used to pat encouragingly, as they stood in rank at school, in their neat gingham frocks, the gift of Mrs. More ; now shivering, thrust aside by the stronger ones, standing with the patient melancholy, peculiar to suffering childhood, until a ray of pity should visit them from some looker-on.

It was a heart-breaking sight, and heart-broken Cathal did look, as he day after day devoted himself to the relief of his miserable tenants ; for a sense of clanship was strong in him, and he felt almost the sorrow of a father for their misery. Every shilling he could collect, he gave for food ; he took no thought for his affairs, or for personal advantage ; for every feeling and impulse merged into his anxiety to save the poor.

The fine old trees of Cappagh, witnesses as they were of his long line of ancestors, he wished to be felled ; but no sale could be got for them, except for prices which could hardly have paid the labour of cutting them, and that alone saved the antique woods. He sold much of his stock, and bought meal for the people ; he gave his herd of deer to feed them—all he had, he devoted to their cause ;—and it was not quite in vain,—he saved some out of the common destruction, even at the cost of his own ruin. But I must not anticipate.

His mother's enthusiasm was deadened by the trials of her later years ; but, in place of her natural impulses to good, had grown, obedience to the dictates of higher rules. She did not, as Cathal did, devote her all, to the present work, and so leave herself without power to do future good ; but she practised the self-denial, enormous to a mind like hers, of controlling her desire to give indiscriminately. Her son forgot justice in charity ; she had strength, even at such a time, to unite them.

Major Wyndham, and other English friends, entrusted munificent sums to her care, of which she laboured untiringly in the distribution, and she sacrificed more than her son, perhaps, in the entire devotion of her time and strength to the poor.

The scenes she and Agnes encountered, were sometimes fearful, in their visits to the more distant poor, among the mountain glens ; and it was often necessary that I should accompany them, when they carried supplies of food, through the less frequented, distant, hamlets. One day, I remember, we went to a far break amongst the hills, where we knew there was a little knot of cabins. There was no way to it, except by a broken path which crossed the moor ; and, when we had driven as far as we could along the road which led in that

direction, we were forced to leave the carriage, and proceed on foot. It was past two o'clock, as we had been busy in the village during the morning, and the sun was already sinking behind the mountain crest—which backed the valley, leaving the deep gorge in which the houses lay, in cold wet gloom.

I begged Mrs. More, whose health could ill bear exposure to wet, to return ; but she refused, and we went on with difficulty, making our way from hag to hag of the rough peat moss. When we were within two hundred yards of the hamlet, Agnes suddenly stopped with an exclamation of horror, echoed by us, when we saw the cause.

A girl of about sixteen lay half covered by the soft ooze of a well-head, as bog springs are called ; her long hair, dark and without lustre, was tangled in the heath, and wet, like it, by the mountain showers. Her face was scarcely pale, but rather sallow, tinged by the peculiar hue, which witnessed but too plainly, the death of starvation she had suffered. I felt for her pulse ; but the cold of her body, and other symptoms, showed me that she had been dead for some hours, perhaps all the preceding night. And yet notwithstanding all the hunger she had evidently endured, one hand, which was stretched

towards the cabins below, clasped a half spilled mug of gruel.

“She must have fainted,” I said, “returning from the relief kitchen yesterday, and died during the night.”

“But the gruel?” said Agnes, doubtingly.

“Her family probably expected it,” I replied, “and she fainted before she could resolve to eat it herself.”

We lifted her up on a hillock of dry heath; her attenuated form was a light weight, reduced as it was, to a degree that I had scarcely supposed compatible with human existence. That famine year taught me strange facts of human endurance!

“We had better hasten on,” said Mrs. More; “it is strange that no one came to look for, or saw her, from the houses.”

The first cabin that we entered was empty; in the next, a man lay propped against the wall, half covered by a mattrass; he looked vacantly at us, and in answer to our questions, he muttered deliriously, his talk running on eating and food. He pointed often to a dark corner in the far part of the room; I went over, and with difficulty pulled out a bundle from it—I opened it—it contained the bodies of two

children, one evidently many days dead. It had been his feeble attempt at burial. The sight of them seemed for a moment to restore his weakened mind. He fixed his filmed eyes on me, and said in a low voice.

“ Mary is gone, too; they are all gone !” After a pause, he muttered, “ No food, and I am dying of hunger. Give me food !” he cried ; and his voice suddenly rose to almost a woman’s scream. The effort exhausted his slight remains of strength, and he fell back, silent and powerless.

We gave him, drop by drop, some milk and water ; and I hastily unbuttoned my outer coat, and spread it over the wretched man ; for he had no other covering but the straw mat over him. We stayed with him until he had partially recovered, though he still remained imbecile. The growing darkness, however, obliged us to go, and we opened the door of the third house, anxious to settle something, if possible, for the permanent relief of the wretched man we had left, and the interment of his three children ; for by his words we knew, that “ Mary ” was the corpse we had passed on the path.

A horrible scene lay before us, when, with some little difficulty, we pushed apart some tem-

porary fastenings, which had been placed to secure the entrance to the last cottage.

The carcase of a sheep was in the middle of the smoky, low kitchen. Its wool remained on it in patches; but portions of the flesh had been roughly torn off, and very recently,—for the flesh was still warm. Far back, in the dusky light, I saw the figures of two men, apparently in deep sleep. Their hands and mouths were smeared with blood—even their clothes were flecked by broad red stains, and the long, shaggy hair on their beards and throats was clotted with it. They had had a savage feast!

I shook one of them gently by the shoulder; but he did not awake—for he was in too profound a lethargy. I scarcely wished to rouse him—alone, in that desolate place, with Mrs. More and Agnes. As I left him, however, I awkwardly stumbled, and the noise awakened him, half aroused as he had been.

He started up angrily.

I said, quietly and calmly,—

“ Mrs. More has come, to give you some assistance.”

He evidently did not believe me—for he advanced menacingly towards me. I stepped back, to avoid him—but there was little cause for

dread ; his own weakness overcame him, and he dizzily staggered to the nearest seat.

“ Be still, and I will do you no harm,” I said. “ You have stolen this sheep,” I continued. “ I see what led you to do so, and I will not inform. I will not even ask you who is your companion ;” and I pointed to the second figure, that still lay, as I thought, asleep on the settle bed. “ I do not wish to know your name—I will not hear any thing that will criminate you ; only let me help you.”

“ Yes, let us help you,” said Mrs. More, who had watched from without, what had passed.

He buried his face in his trembling hands ; but in a moment looking up, he exclaimed—

“ You are too good to me ; but I am not so bad as I seem. I did not do it”—he went on, pointing to the sheep—“ but my child was starving, and I agreed to give that man there, shelter, if he would give me my fill, and the child’s fill,—and he brought it here ; and we ate and drank—but it killed him, and it killed the child, and it was a mercy and a blessing for them ; and I drank more when I saw them dead, to try if it would kill me, too ; and I thought it did—but you woke me.”

I hastily went over to his companion, who yet

lay, without stirring, on the pallet. He was quite insensible, but not yet dead. I tried what remedies I could, and a little recovered him ; but before morning, as I afterwards heard, he died.

“ Where is the child ?” Mrs. More asked.

He pointed to the sheep ; and almost hidden from us by it, lay a little boy, who in his set teeth held a long strip of flesh, which he had torn from the side of the carcase. He was quite dead. The glut of food, after long abstinence, had been too much for him.

By his strange words and way of speaking, and his sentiments so foreign to our Irish feelings,—for we abhor suicide,—I guessed the unfortunate man’s mind was unsettled, and that it was little use asking him to give assistance to his still more unfortunate neighbour ; but yet I said—

“ Your neighbour is dying ; his daughter Mary is dead. Why did you not share with him ?”

He laughed bitterly. “ Didn’t I say so, after all their preaching about virtue and honesty ? What’s become of it now ?”

He was in no state to receive blame ; we silently left him, and hastened down to some houses further on, where we hoped to find people

who could assist the wretched creatures we had left. From them we heard of Mary and her father ; how she had maintained him, when he could get no work, by hers ; and how, when that source failed, she daily walked to the soup-kitchen, five weary miles of mountain-walking, and carried his small porringer of gruel untouched, when she was half fainting from fatigue and hunger.

“ Why could he not go himself ? ” asked Mrs. More.

“ My lady,” a woman said, “ his last stitch of clothes went, striving to live ; and it was since that, he has been so badly off. Before, he used to get a trifle of work, here and there ; for all knew him to be an honest man.”

“ And could you do nothing for him ? ” I said.

“ We’re on the same allowance ourselves, your honour,—and what could we do ? Only that we have rags enough to cover us, and can go ourselves, and have not the weary mountain-walk, we would be the same way this minute.”

“ And his neighbour—is he as badly off ? ” asked Agnes.

They looked down, and answered nothing ; evidently it was known that he had supplied himself by sheep-stealing.

As Mrs. More did not wish to find out more of the matter, she left the cottage, and we drove quickly home, from whence she sent a trusty man and some labourers to bring the bodies we had found, down for burial, and arrange for the assistance of the two survivors.

One of them, the father of "Mary," has been weak in intellect ever since ; to the other, Cathal lent money to emigrate to America. We have since heard that he is doing well there ; and his letters are full of gratitude to the More family.

It had been a trying day to my two companions ; they had many such, but they would not indulge themselves in weakly shrinking from the mere sight of evils, which their fellow-creatures were forced to endure. No scene was too painful, no distress too shocking, to dishearten them from giving every assistance they could in its alleviation.

CHAPTER XVIII.

I WILL not drag my readers through the depths of Irish misery, which I explored that spring. Notwithstanding all our efforts, the numbers who died in the distant mountains and villages must have been immense. Whole families, forgotten in the universal panic and cry for food, disappeared, and were heard of no more. Of disease brought on by insufficient and unwholesome food, an average of two in each household, of the population, were carried off. Cathal, who, by his experience of the value of well-directed labour, was a good judge of the subject, deplored the waste of money which was going on in the spoiling of the roads, under pretence of their improvement. The very tools the labourers used, spoke of the work they did—the shallow barrows, and shovels which might be a child's toys—the donkey-carts, that could not contain a load even to the starved tottering beasts that drew them. It was a miserable farce,—sometimes a tragedy, where task-work was the rule, and the fathers of large

families were so weak, that they could earn no more than three half-pence, or two-pence a day. A tragedy in real life ; not as in books, made so by a few deaths at the end ; but a tragedy, of which the whole subject was one long, lingering death by starvation, acted in verity by all the players. But I promised not to enlarge on these sad subjects. The reader must need a break in these descriptions, and yet, from public distress, I can only turn to private care and anxiety—that mental care, more harassing even than physical suffering. It was in the month of April, as we were assembled at Cappagh for breakfast, one morning, that a letter arrived for Cathal, the contents of which were painful, as we saw by his gloomy expression. He gave it to his mother, and watched her face as she looked over it.

“ Mr. Schelling speaks of interest due,” she said calmly, but gravely. “ Is there much ? ”

“ Only the half-year’s ; a month due,” said her son, bitterly. “ I described the misery we are trying to alleviate—I asked him to wait until autumn, that I might have more funds to employ the poor now, when they are dying of want. You see the answer.”

“He refuses. But did you expect any thing else?”

“I expected a concession from him, rich man as he is, which I thought no Christian—I mean human being—would refuse,” he said.

Mrs. More looked silently at him ; and, turning away half impatiently, he continued—

“I dare say he has some urgent calls on him after all ; in any case, I must pay him now, and dismiss half the workmen.”

“No,” said his mother, “pay him ; above all, continue all your works. I can supply you.” He looked somewhat astonished, and begged her to tell him how. She would not, and overruled every objection he made to her “self-sacrifice, generosity, &c., &c.” Next morning, a small set of valuable diamonds, which she had inherited from her mother, were on their way to Dublin, and, in a few days, four hundred and thirty pounds, their estimated value, was returned ; of course, much less than their original cost. Cathal never knew the circumstance ; but Mr. Schelling was paid, and the works went on vigorously. A few days brought back his acknowledgment, and, enclosed in it, a money order for five hundred pounds, payable at —— bank. Cathal handed it triumphantly to Mrs.

More before he read the letter, exclaiming, "You see, mother, Schelling only wanted to prove my solvency; he has sent over this splendid sum for the poor, after all." But his countenance fell on reading the letter, and he silently laid it by his mother's side, and walked in much disturbance up and down the room;—Mr. Schelling directed the money to be appropriated to the finishing and fitting up of the Unitarian chapel. He wrote in his usual style, appealing to Cathal's honour, and expressing the utmost confidence in his friendship.

"I cannot, will not, do such a thing," said Cathal, vehemently; "when the poor are perishing by dozens, spend in useless architecture!"

"Yet, my son," said his mother, "you cannot now disobey your trust; but it seems to me," she continued, "that Mr. Schelling's wishes can be fully carried out, at the present low price of both materials and labour, for a less cost than he supposes."

"Yes!" said Cathal; "but what then?"

"Find out the lowest estimates from the tradespeople, buy the materials in the most economical form; and then, if there be any surplus, consult your friend about its use."

"Friend!" repeated her son. "Well, mother, I will try."

He succeeded ; he calculated that all needful could be well done for something less than four hundred pounds, leaving a hundred clearly over ; for Mr. Schelling had used the rule of English prices in his plans, and had not made allowance for the depreciation of labour in Ireland, since all classes had thrown themselves into its market. Cathal wrote a minute estimate to Mr. Schelling. I saw his letter—it was couched in the formal language of mere business ; and, with the haughty constraint of disappointed friendship, he requested, at the end, to know what he should do with the surplus ; pointing out the good it might effect among the poor ; and, if Mr. Schelling thought fit to appropriate it to their use, he asked to whom he should commit its distribution. It cost him a sacrifice of pride even writing thus much of begging, though it was for the poor ; but even pride he could give up in their cause.

Mr. Schelling's answer arrived by return of post from London.

Cathal hastily opened it, and reading it through, turned exultingly to his mother.

“It is all right, mother. I knew Schelling would agree. I wish you would think better of him than you do.”

He was anxious to think well of a man with whom he had so entangled himself; but the tone of Mr. Schelling's letter showed that charity did not prompt his gift; he had evidently perceived Cathal's anger at his former letter, and, as his plans were not yet completed, he desired to avoid any present break in their nominal friendship.

He wrote, describing the gift as solely offered at Cathal's request, thus putting him under a species of obligation to the giver; he wound up by praise of his friend's diligence and punctuality, congratulations on his sense and energy, and by the species of flattery, delicately and inoffensively administered, which he knew would touch the secret springs of Cathal's foibles.

"Come, mother, say something," exclaimed Cathal, gaily.

She sighed. "What will you do with his hundred pounds?"

"What would you like to do with them?" asked her son, in return.

"They must be spent on food, I suppose. A drop in the ocean!"

"When do you think this unceasing cry for food will cease?" asked I—for I breakfasted with them.

“Not until half the population cease to live,” said Mrs. More; “unless, indeed, the potatoes succeed this year.”

“They are not sowing much,” said her son.

“Suppose we spend fifty pounds of this sum in giving seed now; allowing, at the same time, a small loan of money to support each family while they are sowing.”

We all recommended this plan; and, though difficult to carry it out, while the starving wretches around were clamouring for a mouthful, Cathal saved much misery in the following year by this preparation for its necessities; some fields, at least, were tilled—some hope began to be rekindled, as the spring wore on and the young corn covered the potato furrows—which had lain the whole winter a ghastly reminder—untouched by their owners.

The road-works and the soup-kitchen were open through the spring; and those who had escaped death, struggled on, inured to hunger, and perhaps kept alive by expectation of a fruitful summer. Misery became more conventional—the first horror had passed away—the poor were more callous to their suffering—and we, perhaps, to the sight of it. But wave after wave of desolating, bitter sorrow, seemed to

follow each other over our unhappy country ; for as the summer advanced, its heats brought with them that typhus fever, which raged so generally throughout the land. Occupied by the duties which arose from all these causes, I had not much observed the growth into completion of the new chapel ; but one day, Sunday, I think it was, I walked with Cathal to look at its advance. It was quite finished, and he pointed out with a slightly absent air all the beauties of its interior, almost too crowded as they were. The mellow sun-light shone through a painted window Mr. Schelling had sent from London, and fell in emerald, topaz, sapphire rays on the burnished organ pipes opposite. The pavement was a mosaic ; formed, as More pointed out to me, of Irish marbles and stones. The pillars ran gracefully up into the high pointed roof. The cornices were ornamented with carved designs of different patterns, cut in the grey stone of the country. Everywhere there was an intricacy of ornament, beautiful yet not sublime.

“ I have ordered to be left, a vacant space for a painting Schelling is bringing over,” said Cathal.

“ Why ! is he coming ?” I asked.

“ Yes, I expect him in September, and his son, too.”

“ Will he remain any time ?”

“He talks of partridge shooting ; and,” continued Cathal, with a slightly embarrassed manner, “he has given me a commission to get a tolerable house, the best in the village that is to be had, prepared for a clergyman of his persuasion.”

“Who are to be the congregation ?” I asked ; “for I only know of two or three Unitarians living hereabouts, and they are at ——, seven miles off.”

“Well, so much the better, said Cathal ;” “I suppose Schelling has a crotchet about building ; he will not gain many proselytes here, and so my mother’s fears are all groundless,” he added, abruptly, and with an air of would-be decision. “Do you not think so, Doctor ?”

“Your mother feared more for yourself, than for others,” I said.

“Pooh ! pooh ! as if I were a likely convert ; but,” he continued, “what do you think of this Unitarian minister that is coming ? I never calculated on him ; but I could not make any objection now, because it would seem irrational at the eleventh hour, when I might have foreseen it all along. What will the rector say ?”

“I fear he will take it much to heart,” I said ; “and your mother ?”

“Oh Doctor !” he suddenly exclaimed, while

an expression of bitter annoyance came over his face ; “ you do not know how I have rued my connexion with Schelling ; no one knows how I have suffered from the alienation of my early friends. I am getting deeper and deeper involved with him, and I cannot prevent this Unitarian settling here now. Mr. Hyde and my mother must condemn me ; and I deserve that they should.”

He seemed to have become aroused to see the mischief he had encouraged, by the prospect of this schismatic preacher’s arrival. I said nothing, for I feared to disturb the re-action towards right ; he was hurt by my silence, for he turned away abruptly ; and after that day, he did not receive me into his confidence for some time.

Poor fellow ! I heartily pitied him—and pitied all the more, because I also so much admired him. There was such nobleness in his character—and the very tendency that led him astray, was but the distortion of a love of justice, which prompted his desire for toleration.

July passed, and during it, and the beginning of August, the fever and general misery were at their worst ; but, as the autumn drew near, the people’s hopes began to rise, and night and morning the scanty potato-crop was

examined, with the avid anxiety of a miser who counts his gold. No blight appeared, except in some highly manured and enclosed gardens, and we all began to breathe more freely. Cathal's apprehensions of the country's ruin were half dispelled ; and even his mother, who, with her clear sight, had foreknown the evils coming, was for a time made hopeful by the prospect of harvest, and of some rest from their labours ; insufficient and disheartening as they had been. Cathal announced to her, Mr. Schelling's intention of establishing a minister of his persuasion in the neighbourhood ; but she showed no surprise, no fresh sorrow, for what she had long foreseen—that and other evils consequent to his bargain. Her son's annoyance was much lessened by her composed reception, of what he so much dreaded to tell her. Indeed, his vexation was rather because he felt the disapproval of his friends, than from a sense of his own wrongfulness.

Of Mr. Hyde, he had seen but little lately, and the subject of Mr. Schelling's influence was never broached between them. Both felt that they could scarcely trust to even the strength of their mutual attachment—to speak patiently and impartially of it ; for the Rector was uncompromis-

ingly plain in his exposal and condemnation of principles which he knew to be wrong.

It was on the eighteenth of September, that Mr. Schelling arrived; such a calm, fine day, that we all felt cheerful, even in momentary expectation of his coming. I know not how it was, but I always, even then, connected him in my mind with misfortune and dissension. Yet, on that day, I could feel nothing but quiet satisfaction, and relief from the weight which had hung on us during the preceding year. I watched the setting sun, reddening the thick stalks of corn in the fields, and the harvest moon rising to wait on her lord and master; his hand-maiden to attend us, when he has lain down in rest. The birds were twittering and fluttering before they went to roost, and all nature was joining in the evening anthem. I could not but also join mentally in a hymn of thankfulness for our good harvest and hopeful autumn.

His carriage and four broke the silence, as it dashed up the hilly avenue with a last effort of the post-horses, its occupants passing me unobserved on the path. Strangely enough, it was just where the new chapel gleamed through the trees, that it overtook me; and I could see Mr. Schelling pointing the building out to a gentleman sitting in the backseat of the britschka.

Rupert's countenance I saw, as the red sunlight on the horizon glanced upon it through the trees. It was sad ; so sad, that I thought I saw wrongly, until a second glimpse again showed me its expression. He was looking away from the chapel, and seemed to take no interest in his father's remarks. The carriage turned a wooded corner, leaving me to think over what was to come.

"The people are, I trust, safe," I said to myself ; "Unitarianism is the last heresy to attract the ignorant.—I wonder what this stranger is like ;—the first dissenting minister I ever saw in Cappagh ;—he looks thin, and sallow ;—bilious temperament,—an intriguer, I dare say. Mr. Hyde refused the invitation to Cappagh for dinner ;—no wonder, as he is there.—Singular, that Mr. Schelling did not leave him in the village, where there are lodgings for him.—This will put Cathal in an awkward predicament, seeming to give such open countenance to this fearful dissent.—Mrs. More will be much distressed. I must walk on, and see how she bears it." And so I soliloquized until I reached the hall-door ; I saw a great deal of luggage being carried in ; gun-cases, and fishing-rods ; auguries that the visitors would stay, at least a week. I found Mrs. More alone, and

looking better than I had expected. On her, I always observed that sorrows preyed most, while they were casting their shadows before. When they really came—and they had come on her of late in battalions—she bore up with energy against them, and was ever prepared to strengthen and console those who were ready to sink. Yet she was keenly alive, and sensitive to evils; and phlegm of character was not the cause of her calm—

I pressed her hand in silence.

“Nay, Doctor,” she said, interpreting my look of inquiry; “it is too late now to avert the mischief; it is useless grieving over it; we must only be doubly diligent in all duties of our church.”

“You are right, my dear madam; but was it no surprise to you, seeing this Unitarian minister?”

“I knew there must be one, when there was a chapel; and, from what I have known of Mr. Schelling, I guessed that he would try to build up his agent in the minds of our people, by assuming my son’s countenance for him.”

“But do you not think it extremely impertinent?” I asked.

“As to that, Doctor, the impertinence was committed long since—not by Mr. Schelling, but by my son, when he insulted our church, and

truth, by his conduct. I cannot complain,—but rather acknowledge that we deserve every annoyance from these strangers.”

Cathal came in as I was about to reply, and Mrs. More changed the subject hastily—and in time—for the three strangers were not a moment behind her son.

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